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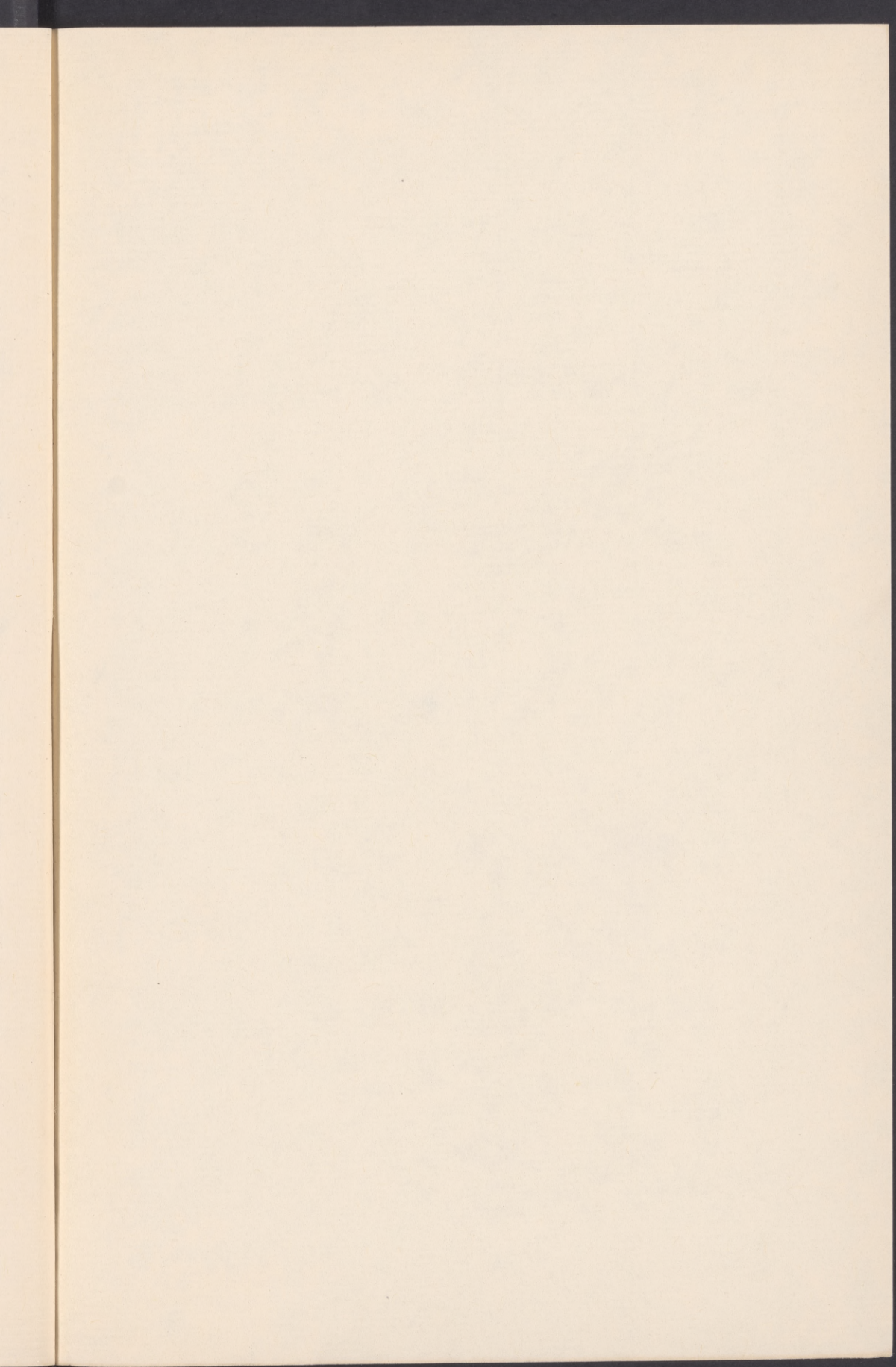
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Taylor, Bayard, 1825-1878.

New pictures from California

HOQ FEB 6 '09



Bayard Taylor



New Pictures from
CALIFORNIA

With Illustrations and Map

FOREWORD BY JOSEPH A. SULLIVAN

Biobooks

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FOREWORD

MORE THAN casual search has uncovered no listing of *More Pictures from California* in the accepted Bibliographies—Cowan, Hanna, Blumann, Wheat, Cleland, and the Zamarrano 80. We have not been able to find it in the Bancroft catalog, the last lack we hope to correct. All of which is rather surprising, for Bayard Taylor is in some respects one of the best known of the writers of early California.

Taylor's *El Dorado*, his narrative of the Gold Rush, is an admitted high spot, although the period it presents has many great accounts—Borthwick, Colton, Kelly, Johnston, Carson, Ferguson, Sherman, Burnett, Gerstaecker and Field all in their way are excellent. While the period of 1859, his second visit, is in a time when he had no rivals. His "*New Pictures*" is a very interesting, well written and unique contribution to the history of California, here reprinted as #30 of the California Narratives, our attention having been first called to it by our friend, Mrs. Gerald Kennedy, we after two years were able to acquire a copy, our text issued by Putnam, New York, 1894. In authorizing its reprinting we feel we have made a definite contribution to the safeguarding of the California heritage. The plates used are by courtesy of the California Historical Society.

More than intrigued, we have closely followed his lecture trail on the Yuba and the 49er highway, but was very much interested in his trip through Sonoma County to the Geysers, and his hurried return by way of Napa, Martinez and Oakland to complete a date at San Francisco. This latter we have followed with much study and believe that on leaving Lafayette he drove by Moraga over the Snake road, his rush, his drive up the twisting road on the east side of the Contra Costa hills and his joy on cresting to the view of Oakland (San Antonio?) is one of the few early printed

descriptions of this presently rapidly growing suburban section.

The text writer needs little introduction. Bayard Taylor, a Pennsylvanian, born in 1825, brought up in Quaker training, was apprentice printer at age 17, although by instinct a poet, his first published verse appearing in 1844. Shortly with help from the Saturday Evening Post and the United States Gazette and under conditional agreement with Horace Greeley, sailed for Germany. His *Views Afoot* issued in 1846 ran to twenty editions. His engaging style took him on commission to the California Gold Rush. "Eldorado," 1850, increased his fame as a traveler. In 1862 served in St. Petersburg as secretary of legation, minister to Germany in 1878, he died there in the same year. His great accomplishment, the two volume translation of *Faust*, is still considered the best.

Poetry was the literary element in which Taylor lived. To this all other efforts and ambitions were subjected. The poetic feel influenced and improved his narrative, his thought on California "O fair young land, the youngest, fairest far of which our world can boast . . . How brought, o panther of the splendid hide, to know thy master's will! No more thou sittest on thy tawny hills in indolent repose! . . . But where the wild-oats mapped thy knees in gold, the ploughman drives his share . . . And Earth shall find her old Arcadian dream Restored again in thee" has magic even today, as has his pre-Jeffers Monterey Pines "What point of Time, unchronicled, and dim as your gray mist that canopies your heads, look from the greedy wave and gaze the sun your hiding-place, . . . And make us of lost centuries of lore the rich inheritors? . . . Anchored in firm-set rock, ye ride the blast and from the promontory's utmost verge, make signal o'er the waters."

Some months ago Miss Thelma G. Neaville showed us a typed listing of the Yuba River placers, prepared by Mr. J. Chester Merriam. On our request Mr. Merriam has re-

leased this excellent research project for printing in this book. Its author, J. Chester Merriam, born at Dobbins, Yuba County, California April 1, 1878, was the youngest of a family of six children. His father, Joseph Merriam, and mother, Marinda Merriam, settled at Dobbins in the year 1863 and operated a farm, hotel, and feed and livery stable. Joseph Merriam and Ex-Governor Frank F. Merriam's father were brothers. Chester did such work as attending the feed yard where many teamsters put up for the night and other transients stopped, doing much of the farm work as well as riding and caring for about 150 head of cattle, also many of the chores that were necessary. He graduated from the Dobbins grammar school and afterward attended San Francisco Business College.

In 1899 entered partnership with J. A. Queenan in the butcher business, having obtained the contract of furnishing meats to the Bay Counties Power Company which afterwards became the Pacific Gas & Electric Company. Built a butcher shop and slaughter house and killing around 15 beeves a week, besides other classes of stock. In 1902 sold his interest in the butcher shop to partner. Purchased the general merchandise business from William Slingsby at Dobbins as well as the mercantile business at Bullards Bar which was operated for a number of years. Incorporated the business in 1905 and it went under the name of the J. Merriam & Son Co. The father was not active in the business.

In July of 1902 received the appointment as postmaster of Dobbins from H. C. Payne, Postmaster General, serving as postmaster for 35 years, and continued in the mercantile business for 37 years. In the early days of merchandising here delivery wagons and pack animals were used in the delivery, as at that time hundreds of Chinese were mining on the Yuba River and the only means of reaching them was by foot or pack animals.

Served as clerk of the Board of Trustees of the Dobbins School Distirct for last 19 years, a director of the Yuba

County Tuberculosis Association, the Yuba County Conservation Council, the secretary of the Yuba County Trustees Association, supervisor of the Civil Defence council in this area, secretary of the Cub Scouts, also of the Keystone Cemetery District, Dobbins Baseball Club and have been manager of same. President of the Yuba County Chapter of the Western Mining Council, Inc.

GOLD BARS ON THE YUBA

In less than four months after the discovery of gold in Coloma the precious metal was found in the present Yuba River, in Yuba County.

LONG BAR NO. 1. Gold was first discovered on the Yuba River at Long Bar June , 1848 by James Speck who was born in Pennsylvania. This was the longest bar on the river and derived its name from this fact. It was developed about the first of October 1849 by a company consisting of H. B. Cartwright, James La Fone, Henry Irwood, W. S. Pearson, David C. Pearson, Edward Pearson, Oliver Smith, Smith Baldwin and Henry Bleeker. Claims were taken up so rapidly that by the spring of 1850 there were 1000 people there. A postoffice was established this same year, there also being six stores, ten saloons and gambling houses, eight hotels and boarding houses, with a population of about four hundred people. This bar was not as rich as Parks Bar and other bars but in 1858 it was progressing on a large scale while most of the other bars were nearly deserted.

SWISS BAR. This bar was nine miles above Marysville, the first mining point above the mouth of the Yuba River. Work was commenced here in 1850 and had always paid good wages. While it was quite a large mining camp it was not as much of a town as Long Bar. It had stores, hotels and boarding houses, saloons and all other necessary businesses but when the bar was worked out all of these vanished and the site is now covered with sand.

KENNEBEC BAR. In October, 1849 the Kennebec Company from Maine located just opposite Long Bar and named it Kennebec Bar. The bar not being very rich, never amounted to much and in March the company abandoned it and went to Downieville.

ROSE BAR. Rose Bar was worked by a company of fifty men in September 1849 to dam the river so as to mine the bed. The dam was completed and work was commenced early in October. The rains set in and in two days the water overflowed the dam and washed it away. In the few days they had taken out one thousand dollars each. During the year the bar became very popular and in 1850 there were 2000

men working there, there being three stores, three boarding houses, two saloons, bakery, blacksmith shop and three other small businesses.

PARKS BAR. David Parks from whom the bar derived its name, came there September 8, 1849. He mined and kept a store and trading post. His customers being the Indians and miners. Goods brought exceedingly high prices, especially among the Indians who knew very little of values, or the worth of gold. They would trade a cup of gold for the same quantity of beads or sugar. Parks left for New Orleans in 1849 and exchanged \$85,000.00 at the bank for coins. As little was known of the value of the gold dust, he received but \$12.00 an ounce for it.

SAW MILL BAR. Opposite Parks Bar, miners commenced work in the summer of 1849. A store was built there and these men built a saw mill in 1849. From this mill the bar derived its name. A mining company was formed here for the purpose of draining the river and was called the Canal Company. This was in May 1850. From the tenth to the fifteenth of September this company took out \$15,898.00.

CORDUA BAR. Cordua Bar was a small bar near the Timbuctoo Ravine. Work was commenced here in 1849. Theodore Cordua started a store from which fact the bar derived its name. The bar was small and was soon worked out.

CAPE HORN. Just above Cordua Bar at a point at the base of a hill a Connecticut Company worked in the summer of 1849. It was christened Cape Horn as this company had come around the Horn.

LANDERS BAR is situated just where the county line meets the mouth of Deer Creek. The first mining was done here in 1850. The bar was small but was quite rich.

CASTLE BAR, just below Nigger Bar was worked very extensively by a company of white miners. Considerable gold was taken out but at this time in 1948 it is completely covered with water from the Narrows Dam, near Smartville.

OHIO BAR. This bar is just above Nigger Bar and a short ways from the mouth of the South Yuba River. It acquired its name from a company of men from the state of Ohio settling in this spot and working there. Considerable of gold was taken from this bar and was worked afterward by the Chinese, and then after they quit snipers worked there until the water from the dam covered it over.

TEXAS BAR. This bar was a ways above Fosters Bar but it did not produce in gold as did Fosters Bar. A company from Texas worked this bar and through this it acquired the name.

SUCKER BAR. This is a bar a short ways above Missouri Bar No. 2 and very little was known about it especially at the later date and

how it got its name has not been known but it is very evident that it was not very rich according to the name.

WILLOW BAR. Just above Sucker Bar is this bar and it appears that from the amount of willows growing there it was given its name. Very little is known of this bar.

NEW YORK BAR. This bar was a smaller bar than many of the others and was not of much consequence and it derived its name from a number of workers on the bar from the state of New York.

ALABAMA BAR. Another one of the smaller bars that acquired the name from a number of men working it from the state of Alabama.

WAMPO BAR. It is not known how this bar derived its name but it seemed that it produced considerable gold while it lasted. It was also a small bar. This was the next bar above Alabama Bar.

FOSTERS BAR. This famous bar was situated between Willow and Mill Creek, just above Bullards Bar. Early in 1849 William Foster located at this point, which afterward became known as Fosters Bar. He worked it for some time employing Indians to assist him. Later in the season the bar became thickly populated by many miners coming from the East. Foster opened a store here and in 1850 other stores and a meat market were established. The bar became the most thriving in the vicinity. A post office was established and the bar was made the voting precinct of all the people in the vicinity. In 1850 the population was set at around twelve hundred. The votes cast in that year were 1500. There were several hotels, five stores, a number of saloons, gambling houses, butcher shops, blacksmith shops, etc.

In March 1850 the miners elected officers for a local government. The prices for necessities were very high. In March 1850 the miners regulated the size of the claims, allowing each man thirty feet front on the river. The dirt or gravel was first carried in buckets and washed out in a cradle. Later, wheelbarrows were introduced, and the long tom. Still later the sluice box came into use.

A toll bridge was constructed across the river in the fall of 1850 and was rebuilt the next summer and again carried away that winter. A ferry was also used at this point. Atkinson & Rice constructed the bridge called Fosters Bar bridge in 1854. In 1851 the bar began to decline until in a few years later it was mostly occupied by Chinamen. It being worked mostly by means of coffer dams.

BULLARDS BAR. This was another large mining bar three-fourths of a mile below Fosters Bar. Work was commenced here in 1849, and the bar soon became a populace place. It was named after Dr. Bullard of Brooklyn, N.Y. who was one of the pioneer miners and afterward lost in a shipwreck. Among the early settlers was Charles E. DeLong, afterwards minister of Japan; Charles E. Lippincott, editor

of the Sierra Citizen in 1855, and afterward auditor of the State of Illinois. William Sharkey, afterwards editor of the Butte Register; Mix Smith, John Sullivan, Huge Shertland, James P. Godfrey, Daniel Gettens, and Roger McMenamin. A company of sixteen shareholders was formed in January 1850 for the purpose of turning the river so as to mine the river bed. They worked until September and made a failure after spending forty-seven thousand dollars. It was afterward turned by flume but was found to be worthless. The first bridge was erected in 1850 by E. S. Gifford. After passing through several hands it became in possession of George Mix, who in 1856 erected the first permanent structure at a cost of \$7,000.00. He also constructed wagon roads to the bar. The flood of 1862 carried away the bridge and Smith constructed another up the river which was afterward sold to John Ramm. In the flood of 1875 this one was destroyed. Ramm then built another at a cost of \$15,000.00. A military company was formed in 1852 in which Daniel Gettens was First Lieutenant.

HORSE BAR. This was quite a lively mining point in 1851 but was soon worked out and abandoned.

WINSLOW BAR, a bar about three miles below Bullards Bar and about one mile below the present Bullards Bar Dam (built in 1921) was named after Captain Winslow, a sea captain. At the time of the gold rush in 1849 Captain Winslow brought a number of Chinese here and worked them on the river. These were the first Chinese brought to this country and that is how they became great river miners. This bar was a famous bar and during the summer of 1850 there were probably three hundred and fifty men there. The three Rideout brothers, N. D., Rance and Sam conducted a commercial business, supplying the miners. In 1853 Dunning went to Galena Hill where he remained until 1857, when he came to Marysville and engaged in the banking business. There were a great many prominent men who worked at this bar. The first saw mill built in this part of the state was at this point. Two brothers by the name of Murphy built and ran the mill. In later years the bar became worked out and abandoned.

POVERTY BAR. At one time seventy-five men worked at this bar. A store was kept by Doctor Grove.

LONG BAR No. 2. This was quite a long bar, two miles above Fosters Bar. It derived its name from its length, being named subsequent to the one above Marysville. It was later worked by Chinamen as was most of the other bars.

OREGON BAR. This bar was once the scene of thriving operations. A store was kept here. It being close to Oregon Hill is how it derived its name.

PITTSBURG BAR. This bar, just above Oregon Bar, was worked by about forty white men but afterward worked by the Chinese. One

man by the name of John Peacock accumulated considerable money and afterward became crazy.

ROCK ISLAND BAR. A company from Rock Island, Illinois, located just above the mouth of Scotts Bar Creek in the spring of 1850 and gave it the name of Rock Island Bar.

ELBOW BAR. In May 1850, five men who afterward moved to Nicolaus, Sutter county, located here. The bar was named from its peculiar shape. It was worked out and abandoned.

MIDDLE YUBA BAR. This bar was at the mouth of the Middle Yuba and at one time there were about seventy men working here.

ENGLISH BAR. This was a small bar said to have derived its name from two Englishmen, here with poor success in 1851. They gave their claim to a man named Wilkins who formed a company and in the summer of 1852, took out ninety thousand dollars.

VANCE WING DAM. At this point a man named Vance constructed a wing dam in 1850. In 1852 B. P. Hugg purchased it and took out several thousand dollars.

WILLIAMS BAR. This bar is above Clingmans Point, and was located by a party of Kanaka's from the Sandwich Islands. It was a small bar and was soon worked out.

RICES CROSSING BAR. This was a very extensive bar about one mile above the mouth of the South Yuba River, was a bar worked by one hundred men. It was called variously "Lousy Level," then "Liars Flat," "Leases Flat," and finally "Rices Crossing." A bridge was built here by Mr. Rice. It was afterward worked by Chinamen and afterwards by a number of Indians and half breeds. It paid big wages after each freshet which came from the debris and sand from the hydraulic mines.

OUSLEYS BAR. Just above Sand Flat Bar, is now entirely covered with debris. Work on this bar was commenced in late 1849 by Doctor Ousley of Missouri who mined and practiced medicine, the bar acquiring its name from him. In three years, it was practically deserted but some work was done there in 1858.

SPECKS CAMP. This place on the river was just above Timbucktoo Ravine and was the first place gold was found on the river in paying quantities. James Speck of Colusa on June 2, 1848, after finding gold in small quantities on Rose Bar, dug at this point in the afternoon and worked it in paying quantities until November of the same year.

SICARD BAR. This was a small bar on the river just above Parks Bar. It derived its name from Theodore Sicard who had a store there. The work was commenced in 1849. It was worked out in a short time.

BARTONS BAR. This bar was two miles above Parks Bar. It was first settled in 1850 by P. Y. Harris. The bar was small but quite rich and was a flourishing camp for six years. Robert and George Barton had the only store there in 1850 and the bar was named after them. At the time there were one hundred miners, several stores, saloons and hotels existed there and three hundred miners worked there later during its prosperity. W. M. Pearls of Smartville stated that Furgerson brothers who had a store here in 1850 sold out at auction, and that he saw in the store a sugar barrel full of gold retorts on the day of the sale. The Furgersons returned east with ninety thousand dollars.

MALAY CAMP BAR. This bar was opposite Landers Bar, near the mouth of Deer Creek, a number of Malays working there and it became known as Malay camp.

UNION BAR. This was near the mouth of Union Creek. It was a small bar and was soon exhausted.

STONEY BAR. About five hundred men worked at this bar in early days. Albert Northup kept a large hotel which would accommodate two hundred and fifty men. John Flattery kept a store.

CONDEMN BAR. This bar was at the mouth of Dobbins Creek and at one time seventy-five white men were at work there. Later, two or three companies of Chinese camped at this spot comprising possibly a hundred who had three wing dams on the river. After most of the Chinese left a number of snipers camped here and several to this day, 1948. However, at this time very little gold is now being taken out.

FRENCHMAN BAR. This bar is between Rices Crossing and Condemn Bar. It was occupied by about one hundred and fifty men, and received its name from the large number of Frenchmen at work here. Later, it was worked by a large number of Chinamen.

MISSOURI BAR No. 1. This bar was just above Condemn Bar and was named by a company of men from Missouri who were at work here. This bar was considered a very rich bar and its location is where the present site of the Colgate Power House is located. It was worked by Chinese, by wing dams, after the white men quit.

CLINGMANS POINT. This was a bar in the short bend of the river between Missouri Bar and the Middle Yuba and was the scene of considerable mining. It was named after a man named Clingman who settled here.

NEGRO BAR. This was once a lively bar, occupied first by Negroes. It was worked afterward by white men and Chinamen. Later, a number of snipers worked here and some of them made very fair wages until the Narrows Dam was built and covered it with water.

MISSOURI BAR No. 2. This bar, second of its name, is just above Elbow Bar. It was located in 1850 by a company chiefly from Missouri and is how it derived its name. There was once a large camp here with hotels, stores and saloons. It was a lively place for three or four years. In the height of its prosperity there were about one hundred men collected here.

YUBA RIVER MINES IN 1850. The mines were in active operation along the Yuba River and its tributaries from ten miles above its mouth to the higher ranges of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. General Vallejo has stated the Yuba was a misspelling of the Uva, a name given to the stream by an exploring party in 1824, on account of the large quantities of wild grape vines found growing on the banks. General Bidwell regarded the derivation of the word Yuba was of Indian origin and that the similarity between it and the Spanish word was a mere coincidence. First division of the county into townships was made August 24, 1850.

SAND HILL, located just back of Cordua Bar on a hill north of Timbuctoo, a small town was started and the place became known as Sand Hill. When hydraulic was commenced it was discovered that the location of Sand Hill was a very rich mining ground. The residents of the town moved to Timbucktoo and the ground has all been worked out by the Exceclsior Co.

TIMBUCTOO. The first mining was done in the ravine about Timbuctoo in 1850. A Negro working in one of the ravines, and from this fact the ravine and town was christened Timbuctoo by William Monigan and L. B. Clark. Timbuctoo was the largest and most thriving locality in the township in 1859. At that time there were two hotels, six boarding houses, eight saloons in addition to the bars in the hotels and boarding houses, one bank, one drug store, two general stores, three clothing and dry goods stores, three shoe shops, one blacksmith shop, two carpenter shops, one lumber yard, one livery stable, one barber shop, three bakeries, two tobacco and cigar stores, one church and one theatre. Another hotel was built in 1861 and a school house in 1862. The total population was about twelve hundred.

GOLD MINING IN YUBA COUNTY. It is conceded that the Yuba River has produced more gold than any other river in the United States. While records are not available on account of the production in the early mining, there is little doubt but what it has produced more gold than any other river in the United States. It is possible that the American River and its tributaries are very close to the Yuba.

Many places on the main Yuba River which comprised the North Fork where gold was discovered in handsome paying quantities in the early "gold rush" days were called bars. There were 46 bars on the river, all in Yuba County, extending from ten miles above Marys-

ville to the northern end of the county line, most of them yielding vast sums of the yellow metal. From reliable sources is the statement that the Yuba River has the greatest number of minerals than any other river in the world.

All of the bars on the river were extensively worked by the early day miners and great quantities of gold was recovered from same which had been sold to the surrounding towns of Smartville, Dobbins, North San Juan, French Corral, Camptonville, Challenge, and many other places. When the better spots on the river became worked out, then these early day workers began leaving the river and looking for better diggings, turning their attention to quartz mining or changing to other vocations.

The departing of the white men from the river naturally gave an opening for the Chinese who had by that time become acquainted with river mining. Several hundred Chinese were engaged in mining the river between Parks Bar and Fosters Bar. In their workings they would wing-dam the river, and generally there was from fifty to sixty to a company, and they had these dams frequently along the river. The river was a long way from being worked out and these Chinese made very good money in the recovery of gold from the stream and it has been stated that much of the gold was sent to China. After the Chinese abandoned the river it was occupied by numerous snipers who preferred working at river mining in place of working for wages. Their method of working was principally by the long tom or sluicing. All the better spots now at this time 1948 are covered with water from various dams placed in the river which has stopped all mining procedure.

At this date, 1948, the only mining done on the Yuba is with the gold dredges. The Yuba Consolidated Dredges are yielding a production of 100,000 ounces of gold annually with the operation of from three to five dredges. These alone are five times the production Alaska has.

In the early times of the gold dredging the greatest depth that was obtained was from 50 to 80 feet, according to the different dredges. The company now has dredges that will dig to a depth of 125 feet. They are now working over ground that had been formerly worked with the smaller dredges, and it has been stated that they are obtaining as much gold as they had produced in the first workings. It is estimated that these dredges will be working for at least 25 years before they have these gold producing grounds worked out. With a digging depth of 125 feet there are places where the bedrock has not yet been reached.

This number five in our President series is dedicated to

GEORGE WASHINGTON

First President of the United States, born in Virginia, his schooling mainly by his father and brother Lawrence, extended to mathematics, trigonometry and surveying, developing his natural talent for draftsmanship, found expression in map-making, a characteristic he found useful throughout his whole life.

Early county surveyor of Culpeper, encountering hardships, his work requiring exactitude, gave him insight into the value of owning land, at his majority he inherited Mount Vernon. In 1753 he accepted Governor Dinwiddie's appointment to protest to the French against encroachments into the Ohio country, resulting in 1754 in his leading a small contingent into battle with the French near Great Meadows, defeating them. In 1755 the Governor appointed Washington Colonel and Commander in Chief of all Virginia forces, was with Gen. Forbes in the enterprise to Fort Duquesne. Married in 1759 to Martha Curtis while serving in the Virginia House of Burgesses.

Chosen from Virginia in 1774, as delegate to the First Continental Congress, in 1775 he was elected to command the armies. He served the war without pay and only claimed his necessary expenses. His handling of his small army was remarkable, seriously handicapped at the start by lack of capable officers, after weary years he brilliantly brought the war to conclusion by the capture of Yorktown Oct. 19, 1781. On April 30, 1789 he took the oath of office of President and was re-elected for a second term. A man of steadfast fortitude, duty a moral obligation, "the success of America was owing to the conduct and character of General Washington."

Oct. 12, 1951
Oakland 10

JOS. A. SULLIVAN

New Pictures from California

I

SAN FRANCISCO, AFTER TEN YEARS

When I first landed in San Francisco, on the 18th of August, 1849, I was put ashore on a clay bank, at the foot of Clark's Hill. I saw before me a large encampment of tents and canvas houses, among which some wooden buildings arose with an air of ostentation. For the fee of two dollars, a Mexican carried my trunk to the Plaza, where I found quarters in the loft of an adobe building—a rude bed, and three meals of beefsteak, bread, and coffee, at thirty-five dollars per week. The town was already laid out, however, and there was much speculation in building lots. About a dozen streets had assumed a visible outline, but beyond the chaotic encampment rose, bleak and barren, a semi-circle of high sand-hills, covered with stunted chaparral. The population of the place was about 5,000.

On the 28th of August, 1859—ten years and ten days later—I found, instead of the bay between Rincon and Clark's Point, spacious and well-built streets, completely covering the former anchorage for smaller vessels. From the water-front—which forms a chord across the mouth of the lost harbor—stretched fifteen massive piers out into the bay. The low ground in front of us was crowded with warehouses and manufactories, as the tall brick chimneys denoted; while up the heights behind, stretched row after row of dwellings, and the diverging lines of streets, to the very summits of the four hills. Our steamer drew up to the end of a pier, and made fast; we were immediately saluted with the cries of hackmen and omnibus drivers; runners with hotel cards

jumped aboard; residents (no longer dressed in flannel-shirts, revolver-belts, and wide-awakes) came down to welcome returning friends—in fact, there was not a Californian feature about the picture, if I except the morning-blanket of gray fog, which the hills of the Coast Range never kick off until nine or ten o'clock. There were no wash-bowls to be seen; no picks; no tents; no wonderful patent machines; no gold-dust.

The scene upon which I looked was altogether unfamiliar to my eye. Flags in the breeze, church-spires, fantastic engine-houses, gay fronts of dwellings, with the animation of the holiday crowds in the streets below, gave the city a gay Southern aspect. Unlike all other American towns, there was nothing *new* in its appearance. The clouds of sand and dust, raised by the summer monsoon, speedily wear off the gloss and varnish of newly-erected buildings, and give them a mellow tone of age and use—the characteristic, as well as the charm of Mediterranean ports. Without the evidence of my own experience, I should have found it impossible to believe that I looked upon the product of ten years.

When the fog had rolled off seaward, and the soft, pale-blue sky of San Francisco arched over the beryl plain of the bay and its inclosing purple mountains, I experienced a mighty desire to shake off the lethargy of a tropical voyage by a drive into the country. I took the precaution, however, to ask what such a luxury would cost. "Twenty dollars, probably," was the answer. Here I began to realize that I had reached California. Nevertheless, I was about to order a vehicle, when a friend placed his own private team at my disposal. We were advised to take the new San Bruno road, which had recently been opened beyond the mountain of that name, in order to afford a shorter and more agreeable road to San José than the old trail over the hills.

The restless, excited, ultra-active condition of mind and body engendered (in myself, at least,) by the San Francisco air, can only be cured, homœopathically, by draughts of the

same. People work here as they work nowhere else in the world. The nor'west wind, flavored with Pacific salt, which draws through the Golden Gate every day at noon, sweeps away not only disease, but sloth, despondency, and stupidity. Bulwer says: "On horseback I am Cæsar, I am Cicero!"—but that afternoon, when I saw again the Mission Valley, and first breathed the heavenly odor of the *Yerba Buena*, sitting behind a span of noble bays, I was Homer, Pindar, Alexander the Great, Peter the Great, Milo of Crotona, and General Jackson, all in one!

We drove through an enchanted land. I thought I had been there before, yet everything I saw was as new to me as it was to my companion. Our hotel stood without the bounds of the San Francisco of 1849. Well I remembered the three miles of loose sand and thorny chaparral which intervened between the ridge terminating in Rincon Point and the Mission of Dolores. Now we drove for half a mile down a broad well-built street. Here and there, behind the houses, lowered a mound of yellow sand, like the scattered forces of a desert kept at bay and but half conquered. The rear of Clay-street Hill, dotted over with small square cottages, resembled Barth's picture of Timbuctoo. But the Mission Valley, in front of us, green and lovely, with a background of purple mountains, was a reminiscence of the fairest scenery of Greece. "Now," said I, "have I found the original type of the landscapes of California!" She has been compared to Italy—to Syria, with more correctness—but her true ante-type in nature is Greece.

Even the vegetation had undergone a change since my first visit. Along the streets, in rows, grew the exquisite feathery acacia; from the balconies, fuchsias hung their pendants of coral and sapphire; heliotropes wantoned in immense clumps under the windows; and the fronts of some of the cottages were hidden to the eaves in the scarlet splendor of geraniums. The *malva*, here a tree, opened its hundreds of pink blossoms: the wild pea-vine, of Australia clambered over the

porticoes, and the willowy *eucalyptus* flourished as if in its native soil. The marshy thickets near the mouth of Mission Creek had vanished and vegetable gardens filled their place; on either hand were nurseries, breathing of mignonette and violets, and covered, chin-deep, with superb roses—huge bouquets of which were offered us by boys, along the road, at “two bits” apiece. German beer and music gardens, the French Hospital, a sugar refinery, and groups of neat, suburban residences, which extended even beyond the Mission, combined to give the valley an old, long-settled air.

Near the top of the hill, behind the Mission building, was a spot which I looked for with a curious interest. In 1849, I had taken up a claim there, had paid for the survey, and, for aught I could learn, acquired as secure a title as most others in San Francisco. My tract contained about two acres—part of which was stony, and all of which was barren: there was neither grass nor water, but a magnificent prospect. At that time, I could scarcely say that I owned anything; and the satisfaction which I felt in sitting upon one of *my* rocks, and contemplating the view from *my* imagined front-window, amply repaid me for the surveyor’s fee. Where the documents are, I have not the least idea: whether the claim was ever worth anything is exceedingly doubtful; but I noticed with exultation that nobody had as yet built upon it. I herewith magnanimously present the property to the first man who shall be absurd enough (in all eyes but mine) to build the house I imagined, and enjoy the view I admired. And this shall be sufficient to him, his heirs, executors, and assigns, to have and to hold, etc., etc.

Crossing the Mission Creek, the road kept on, over rolling hills, toward the San Bruno mountain. On either side were farms—the fields divided by substantial fences of redwood, the houses small and one-storied, but sufficiently comfortable, and the gardens luxuriant with vegetables. The landscape was dotted with windmills, which are very generally used for irrigation, and form a marked feature in the

agricultural scenery of California. About six miles from the city, we came upon a hill, divided by a narrow valley from the San Bruno range. The mountains, lighted by the oblique rays of the afternoon sun, gleamed in the loveliest play of colors. The tawny hue of the grass and wild oats, brightening into lines of clear gold along the edges of the hills buttressing their base, brown on their fronts, and dark in the sloping ravines, resembled velvet of the richest texture; while the farther peaks—pink in light, and violet in shade—gave the contrast of a delicate silk. A grove of live-oaks—slanting away from the wind in such curious attitudes of haste, that they seemed to be scampering at full speed over the hill—stood in the foreground, while on our left the transparent green of the bay shifted through blue into purple, far off. For aerial beauty and harmony of color, I have never seen anything to surpass this view, except in Greece.

My first walks through San Francisco were devoted to the search for some old landmark—some wooden, iron, or copper house which had been standing in 1849. But I was disappointed: there was nothing which I recognized. Four great fires had swept away the temporary structures, which had cost almost their weight in silver, and stately houses of brick or granite stood in their places. Montgomery street—which is now, as it was then, the centre of business—would be considered a handsome, well-built street anywhere; while the other main avenues, although abounding in cheaply-built and hastily-erected wooden edifices, partake, at least, of the same character of life and activity. San Francisco, with its population of 80,000, has already the stamp of the great metropolis which it is destined to be.

Everywhere change! I went to the plaza, which I last saw inclosed by gaming-hells on three sides, and the U.S. Custom House on the fourth. The flimsy structures of '49 had vanished like an exhalation—even the old adobe, with its tiled roof, representing the early days of California, was gone. In place of the Parker House stood a City Hall, of Australian

freestone. A lofty, irregular mass of buildings had arisen on all sides, dwarfing the square, which, surrounded by a heavy iron railing, and devoted entirely to threadbare turf and some languishing, dusty trees, had a prim and respectable air, truly; yet I missed the rude, fantastic, picturesque, unrestrained life wherewith it was filled ten years ago. The old Post-Office had almost passed out of memory, and a structure much more massive and spacious than our lubberly city of New York can boast of (which must be content with the most inconvenient little church this side of the Atlantic), is now devoted to Mails and Customs. From all parts of the city rise the spires of churches and engine-houses, showing that the most ample provision has been made for the quenching of both spiritual and temporal fires. To complete the climax of progress, San Francisco is more honestly governed than New York, has a more efficient police, and better guards the lives and property of her citizens.

It is unfortunate that the advice of an intelligent engineer could not have been taken, when the city was first laid out, and thus the advantages of its topography turned to better account. The people seem at first to have cherished the idea that the hills would ultimately be leveled, or, at least, their tops thrown into the hollows between, so as to produce that uniformity of surface in which the American mind delights. Great excavations have been made at the foot of Telegraph Hill, but mainly for the purpose of running a street through to North Beach. The other hills, however, proved too formidable; and the inhabitants have at last found out, perforce, that the slight inconvenience they occasion is a hundredfold atoned for by the picturesque beauty they confer upon the city, and the charms which they give to a residence in it. Clay Street Hill is but little short of four hundred feet in height, and the windows of the private houses on its side command the grandest views of the city, the bay, the Golden Gate, and the Mission Valley. Had the streets been arranged terrace-wise along the hills, as in Genoa, they would not only have

been more convenient, but far more beautiful. It is still not too late to remedy this mistake, in part.

The view of San Francisco, from either Rincon or Telegraph Hill, surpasses—I say it boldly—that of any other American city. It has the noblest natural surroundings, and will, in the course of time, become the rival of Genoa, or Naples, or even Constantinople. From the breezy height of Rincon the whole town lies before you, rising gradually from the water to the summit of the semi-circular sweep of hills. Its prevailing colors are gray, white, yellow, and pale red; while, at this distance, the very confusion and incongruity of its architecture becomes an additional charm. Over Telegraph Hill rise the dark-blue mountains of Angel Island and Sausalito; to the right stretches the bay, with the brown steeps of Yerba Buena guarding the anchorage, while beyond all, the mountains of Contra Costa, bathed in the loveliest golden and lilac tints, melt, far to the north and south, into the distant air. I have seen this landscape, with all its grand features, of a cold, dark, indigo hue, under heavy clouds—glittering with a gem-like brilliancy and play of color, under a clear sky, and painted—bay, islands, and shores—with the deepest crimson of sunset, till you seemed to look on a world smouldering in the fires of Doom. It was therefore no marvel to me, when nine out of ten of my old acquaintances said: “I have made up my mind to live and die here—I cannot be contented elsewhere.”

The first thing which attracts the notice of the stranger who arrives at San Francisco in summer, is probably the last thing which he would expect to find in so recently-settled a country. The profusion, variety, and quality of the fruit which he sees displayed on all sides fills him with astonishment. What magic, he asks, has evoked from this new soil such horticultural splendors? What undiscovered nutriment has fattened these plethoric apples? Whence did these monstrous, melting pears gather their juice? What softer sun and

sweeter dew fed these purple nectarines—these grapes of Eshcol—these peaches, figs, and pomegranates?

California, in fact, is the Brobdignag of the vegetable world. The products of all other lands are Lilliputian compared with hers. Erect your ears and expand your eyes, my reader; for I am going to tell the truth, and nothing but the truth. I forget the exact measurement of the peaches; but there are none in the world so large—with, perhaps, the exception of those of Papigno, in the Apennines. The size, however, is not procured at the expense of the flavor. Excessive irrigation of the orchards, it is true, dilutes their rich, ambrosial quality; but the peaches of Marysville and the lower slopes of the Sierra Nevada are not a whit inferior to those of New Jersey or Montreuil. The skin has a peculiarity which I have not found elsewhere. Delicate as the silky lining of an eggshell, it peels off at a touch; and the royal fruit, with its golden and ruby nerves laid bare, is flayed without a knife. As you crush it upon your tongue, you remember the ambrosial fruits upon which, according to Arabic tradition, Adam was fed; and wonder how soon your breath, like his, will be able to turn the coarse growth of the thickets into cinnamon and sandal-wood.

Apples and pears have been raised, weighing three pounds apiece; and I have been told of instances in which the fruit upon a tree weighed more than the tree itself. An orchard begins to bear the second year after planting; and the grafts upon an old tree have yielded two hundred pounds' weight of fruit in the same length of time. I have never seen a single instance in which the fruit was knotty, wormy, or otherwise imperfect. Nature seems to possess not only a fecundity, but a degree of health, unknown in any other part of the earth. In Santa Cruz, a peach tree two years old produced *two hundred* perfect peaches. Apple trees sometimes yield two crops in the course of a single season. The extent to which fruit is already cultivated in California may be inferred from the fact that the peach trees in the State number 2,000,000;

apple trees, 750,000; and pear trees, 100,000. The number of grape-vines is estimated at *five millions*, the average yield of which is fourteen pounds of grapes for each vine.

A few days after our arrival at San Francisco, the annual Fair of the Horticultural Society was held. It was a singular collection of vegetable monstrosities. I saw, for the first time in my life, cabbage-heads weighing between fifty and sixty pounds; onions as large as my head; and celery that threatened to overtop corn-stalks and sugar-cane. Upon one table lay a huge, dark-red object, about the thickness of my body. At a distance, I took it for the trunk of some curious tree; but on approaching nearer, I saw that it was a *single beet*, weighing 115 pounds! The seed was planted in the spring of 1858; and when taken up in the fall of that year, the root weighed 43 pounds. The owner, desiring to procure seed from so fine a specimen, planted it again last spring. But it wouldn't go to seed! It devoted all its energies to growing bigger; and here it was, sound throughout, and full of a life which seemed almost supernatural. I was glad to learn that it was to be planted again the next spring, and perhaps the year after—the owner having declared that he would keep on planting it until it reached a thousand pounds, or consented to run to seed!

The circumstances under which I visited San Francisco naturally procured for us a very pleasant introduction to its society. Besides, many of my friends of '49 were still residing there, no longer lonely and homeless, enduring a virtual exile for the sake of speedy gain, but with their families around them, working with more moderation, and finding a permanent and happy home in the spot which they first looked upon as a temporary stopping-place. Active as their life is, it does not wholly prohibit a fair amount of social relaxation. Society there is also too new to set up exclusive barriers; its tone is liberal and metropolitan, and the mingling of so many various elements relieves it of that prim, respectable dullness which characterizes some of our older

cities. The society of San Francisco seems to me to be above the usual average of refinement and cultivation, which is partly owing to the fact that the female portion has improved even more by transplantation than the male.

As we in the Atlantic States often exaggerate the prevailing fashions of Europe, so in California there is a still further exaggeration. Nowhere are wider hoops expanded, smaller bonnets placed *against* the head, or more barbaric circles of gold attached to the ears. Nowhere are the streets swept with such expensive silks. Few of the dwelling-houses, as yet, admit of very luxurious entertainments, but it is easy to foresee that this additional field of expenditure will ere long be opened. Where there is so much female beauty, and where so many of the gentlemen have unlearned habits of close economy, luxury is the natural result. Why, even servant-girls in California dress in silk and wear twenty-dollar bonnets!

I had the best opportunity for judging of the average cultivation of the San Franciscans. A lecturer sees people *collectively*, as well as individually, and takes their intellectual measure by the impressions which come to him in a single hour—nor are such rapid conclusions as he draws generally far from the truth. Holmes says that a popular lecture should contain nothing which five hundred people cannot understand and appreciate at the same instant: therefore, when a lecturer finds that five hundred out of a thousand are following him closely, treading securely and evenly in the tracks of his thought, he may be sure that their mental calibre is at least equal to the bore and range of his own mind. In San Francisco, lectures (at least special importations for that object) were new: curiosity no doubt contributed to the success of the experiment, but it was none the less a test of the cultivation of the audience.

The impression made upon me was precisely similar to that produced in Boston. At first, there was the usual amount of curiosity, followed by an uncertain silence and impassive-

ness. Judgment was held in abeyance; each depended a little on the verdict pronounced by others, but all at last silently coalesced unto a mutual understanding, and were thenceforth steadily attentive, critical, and appreciative. These phases of the mind of an audience are not betrayed by any open demonstration. They communicate themselves to the mind of the lecturer by a subtle magnetism which he cannot explain, yet the truth of which is positive to his mind. I am sometimes inclined to think that there is as distinct an individuality in audiences as there is in single persons. The speaker, after a little practice, is able to guess the average capacity as well as the average cultivation of those whom he addresses. Thus, notwithstanding the heterogeneous character of the population of California, the companies to whom I lectured made no divided impression upon me; each community, new as it was, had already its *collective* character.

2

THE VALLEY OF SAN JOSE

Having made arrangements to give two lectures in San José, I availed myself of the kind offer of Mr. Haight, of the Mercantile Library of San Francisco, who proposed conveying us thither in his carriage. The distance is fifty-one miles—San José lying in the mouth of the celebrated valley of the same name, which stretches southward for forty miles between the two ranges of the Coast Mountains—having once been, from all appearance, a portion of San Francisco Bay. I had been over the road four times in 1849—once on foot, once in a cart, and twice on muleback—and flattered myself that I was thoroughly familiar with the country; but I soon found I knew very little about it. The difference between a trail through a wilderness and a fenced-in road, with bridges,



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taverns, incipient villages even, scattered along it, was greater than I had imagined.

"Where are the nine-league ranches of the native Californians?" I asked.

"They have been swindled out of them."

"Where are the grizzly bears and coyotes?"

"They have been killed off."

"Where are the endless herds of cattle?"

"Butchered for the San Francisco market."

"Who cut down the magnificent trees that once stood here?"

"The Pikes."

Here I must make an explanation. A "Pike," in the California dialect, is a native of Missouri, Arkansas, Northern Texas, or Southern Illinois. The first emigrants that came over the plains were from Pike county, Missouri; but as the phrase, "a Pike county man," was altogether too long for this short life of ours, it was soon abbreviated into a "Pike." Besides, the emigrants from the aforementioned localities belonged evidently to the same *genus*, and the epithet "Western" was by no means sufficiently descriptive. The New England type is reproduced in Michigan and Wisconsin; the New York, in Northern Illinois; the Pennsylvania, in Ohio; the Virginia, in Kentucky; but the Pike is a creature different from all these. He is the Anglo-Saxon relapsed into semi-

barbarism. He is long, lathy, and sallow; he expectorates vehemently; he takes naturally to whisky; he has the "shakes" his life long at home, though he generally manages to get rid of them in California; he has little respect for the rights of others; he distrusts men in "store clothes," but venerates the memory of Andrew Jackson; finally, he has an implacable dislike to trees. Girdling is his favorite mode of exterminating them; but he sometimes contents himself with cutting off the largest and handsomest limbs. When he spares one, for the sake of a little shade near his house, he whitewashes the trunk.

In all parts of California you now find the Pike. In the valleys of San José, Napa, and Russian River, he has secured much of the finest land. But some of his original characteristics disappear, after he has been transplanted for a few years. He wears a tan-colored wide-awake; sits in a Mexican saddle; becomes full and ruddy, instead of lank and sallow; and loses his chronic bitterness of spirit as "the shakes" cease to torment him. If he would but pay a little more attention to the education of his children, the young Pikes, or Pickerels, might grow up without those qualities which have made their parents rather unpopular. The name "Pike" is a reproach—a disparagement, at least—in most parts of California.

Following the new turnpike until we had passed the San Bruno Mountain, we came upon the rich level country beyond, as the sun, driving the dull fog-clouds seaward before him, brought warmth to the air and color to the landscape. On one side were salt marshes, whereon hundreds of cattle were grazing; on the other, white farm-houses, nestled in live-oak groves, at the bases of the yellow hills. I looked eagerly for the ranche of Sanchez, where I had twice passed a night; but, though our road led us directly past the house, I failed to recognize it. The mud-colored adobe hut, with its tiled roof, had been transformed into a white building, with shining roof and broad veranda. All the surroundings were changed; other buildings had sprung up in the neighbor-

hood; and the very face of the landscape seemed no longer the same.

I noticed with pleasure that the settlers had generally selected the sites of their houses with good taste, building them in the midst of the superb natural parks, which were not always wantonly hewed away. The architecture, also, was well adapted to the country and climate—simple forms, roofs flatter than usual, and always spacious verandas, sometimes encircling the whole house. As there is no snow, and but little frost (the thermometer never falling below 20°), both paint and stucco are very durable; and the cheerful, airy architecture of Southern Europe will, in the end, be preferred to any other. What a country this will be, when stately mansions, adorned with art and taste, replace the first rude dwellings, and the noble parks surround the homes for which they have waited thousands of years!

To me, there is no delight of the senses quite equal to that of inhaling the fragrance of the wild California herb—the “yerba buena” of the Spaniards, the “tar weed” of the Pikes. It is a whitish, woolly plant, resembling life everlasting, and exudes, when mature, a thick aromatic gum. For leagues on leagues the air is flavored with it—a rich, powerful, balsamic smell, almost a *taste*, which seems to dilate the lungs like mild ether. To inhale such an air is perfect ecstasy. It does not cloy, like other odors; but strengthens with a richer tonic than the breath of budding pines. If *Life* had a characteristic scent, this would be it: that a man should die while breathing it, seems incredible. A lady with weak nerves informed me that it made her sick—but some persons “die of a rose, in aromatic pain.” To me, it stirs the blood like a trumpet, and makes the loftiest inspiration easy. I write poems, I paint pictures, I carve statues, I create history. If I should live to be old, and feel my faculties failing, I shall go back to restore the sensations of youth in that wonderful air.

After a ride of twenty miles, we passed some noble ranches

of 2,000 acres each, and approached San Mateo. The deep, dry bed of the creek, shaded with enormous bay trees, chestnuts, and sycamores, was fresh in my recollection. The glorious trees were still standing; but among them, on the right, rose a beautiful Gothic residence; and after we had crossed the arroyo on a wooden bridge, we drew up at a handsome hotel on the left. Everywhere, neatness, comfort, and a profusion of shrubs, flowers, and vines. Opposite the hotel was the country residence of Captain Macondray, my fellow-passenger ten years ago—now one of the oldest inhabitants, happy in a success which he has wholly deserved. As we reached the house, through a lawn dotted with glittering bays and live-oaks, the captain came out to welcome us; and I could not refrain from expressing my delight that San Mateo had fallen into hands which will protect its beauty.

Our walk through the garden was marked by a succession of exclamations. Such peaches, such pears, such apples and figs! What magic is there in this virgin soil? The wild crab is as far behind the products of our Atlantic orchards, as are the latter behind the fruit that we saw. Colossal, splendidly colored, overflowing with delicious juice, without a faulty specimen anywhere, it was truly the perfection of horticulture. In a glass-house (necessary only to keep off the cool afternoon winds) we found the black Hamburg, the Muscatel, and other delicate grapes, laden from root to tip with clusters from one to two feet in length. The heaps of rich color and perfume, on the table to which we were summoned, were no less a feast to the eye than to the palate.

Continuing our journey, we bowled along merrily over the smooth, hard road, and presently, Redwood City, the county-seat, came in sight. Ten miles ahead, towered the solitary redwood, two hundred feet in height—the old landmark of the valley. The town numbers perhaps four or five hundred inhabitants, having grown up within the last four or five years. Beyond this, the quality of the soil deteriorates somewhat; the sea winds, sweeping over gaps in the coast-

range, giving a rawness to the air, and fringing every branch of the oaks with long streamers of gray moss. This part of the road would have been monotonous, but for the magnificent frame of mountains which inclosed it. The bay, on our left, diminished to a narrow sheet of silvery water, and the ranges on either hand gradually approached each other, their golden sides no longer bare, but feathered with noble groves of oak and redwood. All along this *jornada* of twenty miles without water—as it was ten years ago—farm now succeeds to farm, the whirling wind-mill beside every house, pumping up orchards, and gardens to beautify the waste.

After crossing San Francisquito Creek, finding our appetites waxing in the keen air, we looked out for a tavern. The first sign we saw was "UNCLE JIM'S," which was enticingly familiar, although the place had an air of "Pike." Our uncle was absent, and there were actually four loafers in the bar-room. That men with energy enough to cross the Plains, should "loaf," in a country ten years old, is a thing which I would not have believed if I had not seen it. The house betrayed its antiquity by the style of its construction. Instead of being lathed and plastered, the walls and ceilings were composed of coarse white muslin, nailed upon the studs and joints. This is the cheap, early method of building in California, and insures sufficient privacy to the eye, though none at all to the ear. Every room is a Cave of Dionysius. Whatever is whispered in the garret, is distinctly heard in the cellar. There can be no family feuds in such a house; Mrs. Caudle might as well give her lectures in public.

A further drive of ten miles, brought us to Santa Clara. The old Jesuit Mission, with its long adobe walls, tiled roof, quaint Spanish church, and orchards hedged with the fruit-bearing cactus, were the same as ever; but beyond them, on all sides, extended a checkerwork of new streets—brick stores, churches, smiling cottages, in the midst of gardens and orchards, which seemed unnaturally precocious. Here both the Catholics and Methodists have large and flourishing schools.

The valley, bathed in sunset, lay before us, calm and peaceful as Eden. The old avenue of trees still connects Santa Clara with San José; but as we drove along it, I looked in vain for the open plain, covered with its giant growth of wild mustard. The town now lies imbedded in orchards, over whose low level green rise the majestic forms of the sycamores, which mark the course of the stream. As the eastern mountains burned with a deep rose-color, in the last rays of the sun, the valley strikingly reminded me of the Plain of Damascus; color, atmosphere and vegetation were precisely the same—not less, but even more lovely. But in place of snowy minarets, and flat oriental domes, there were red brick masses, mills, and clumsy spires, which (the last) seemed not only occidental, but accidental, so little had they to do with architectural rules.

San José, nevertheless, is a very beautiful little town. Many of the dwellings recently erected are exceedingly elegant, and its gardens promise to be unsurpassed. Its growth has been slow (the population, at present, not exceeding twenty-five hundred), but it has scarcely recovered from the misfortune of having been the State capital. The valley in which it lies is one of the most favored spots in the world, in point of fertility, salubrity of climate, and natural beauty. When the great ranches are properly subdivided, as they will be in time, and thousands live where units are now living, there will be more no desirable place of residence anywhere on the Pacific coast.

What a day was that which succeeded our arrival! As Howadji Curtis says: "Opals and turquoises are the earth's efforts to remember a sky so fair." As soon as the last fringe of fog disappeared, and the valley smiled in cloudless sunshine, we twain, seated in a light buggy, behind an enthusiastic horse, set out for the mines of New Almaden. Our road led southward, up the valley. Near the town, the soil, baked by four months of uninterrupted sun, and pulverized by thousands of wheels, was impalpable dust for six inches deep;

but the breeze blew it behind us, until some eddy caught and whirled it into slender, smoky pillars, moving across the yellow stubble-fields until they dissolved. After three or four miles, however, the road became firm, and gloriously smooth; and the ambrosial herb, which had been driven back by gardens and orchards, poured its intoxicating breath on the air.

Now, how shall I describe a landscape so unlike anything else in the world—with a beauty so new and dazzling that all ordinary comparisons are worthless? A valley ten miles wide, through the centre of which winds the dry bed of a winter stream, whose course is marked with groups of giant sycamores, their trunks gleaming like silver through masses of glossy foliage: over the level floor of this valley park-like groves of oaks, whose mingled grace and majesty can only be given by the pencil: in the distance, redwoods rising like towers; westward, a mountain-chain, nearly four thousand feet in height—showing, through the blue haze, dark-green forests on a background of blazing gold: eastward, another mountain-chain, full-lighted by the sun—rose-color, touched with violet shadows, shining with a marvellous transparency, as if they were of glass, behind which shone another sun: overhead, finally, a sky whose blue lustre seemed to fall, mellowed, through an intervening veil of luminous vapor. No words can describe the fire and force of the coloring—the daring contrasts, which the difference of half a tint changed from discord into harmony. Here the Great Artist seems to have taken a new palette, and painted his creation with hues unknown elsewhere.

Driving along through these enchanting scenes, I indulged in a day-dream. It will not be long, I thought—I may live to see it before my prime of life is over—until San José is but a five-days' journey from New York. Cars which shall be, in fact, traveling-hotels, will speed on an unbroken line of rail from the Mississippi to the Pacific. *Then*, let me purchase a few acres on the lowest slope of these mountains, overlooking the valley, and with a distant gleam of the bay: let me build

a cottage, embowered in acacia and eucalyptus, and the tall spires of the Italian cypress: let me leave home when the Christmas holidays are over, and enjoy the balmy Januaries and Februaries, the heavenly Marches and Aprils of my remaining years here, returning only when May shall have brought beauty to the Atlantic shore! There shall my roses out-bloom those of Pæstum: there shall my nightingales sing, my orange-blossoms sweeten the air, my children play, and my best poems be written!

I had another and a grander dream. A hundred years had passed, and I saw the valley, not, as now, only partially tamed and reveling in the wild magnificence of Nature, but from river-bed to mountain-summit humming with human life. I saw the same oaks and sycamores, but their shadows fell on mansions which were fair as temples, with their white fronts and long colonnades: I saw gardens, refreshed by gleaming fountains—statues peeping from the gloom of laurel bowers—palaces, built to enshrine the new Art which will then have blossomed here—culture, plenty, peace, happiness everywhere. I saw a more beautiful race in possession of this paradise—a race in which the lost symmetry and grace of the Greek was partially restored—the rough, harsh features of the original type gone—milder manners, better-regulated impulses, and a keener appreciation of all the arts which enrich and embellish life. Was it only a dream?

After a drive of ten miles, we drew near the base of the western mountains, and entered a wilder, but not less beautiful region. The road led through a succession of open, softly-rounded hills, among which the first settlers were building their shanties. The only persons we met were Mexicans, driving carts, who answered my questions in Spanish. Three miles further, a deep, abrupt glen opened on our right. The hot, yellow mountain-sides shut out the breeze, and the sun shone fiercely upon the deep, dazzling green of the trees which overhung a little brook below us. Presently we reached a large, white mansion, surrounded by a garden of fig, peach, and

pomegranate trees. A uniform row of neat wooden cottages followed; and beyond them, on an open space, rose the tall, black chimneys of the smelting-furnaces. This was New Almaden.

At a small, but comfortable, tavern we obtained dinner. The host, a perfect specimen of sunburnt health and natural politeness, afterwards showed us the soda spring and the smelting-houses. The mines of cinnabar are two miles off, near the top of the mountain, and thirteen hundred and fifty feet above the sea. As they were then under litigation, instituted by the United States government, all labor had been suspended. The principal adit is four thousand feet in length—the ore being found in detached masses. The average annual production is something over a million pounds, which is obtained at an expense of \$280,000, and yields a profit considerably greater. The process of smelting is very simple, the mercury being detached from the cinnabar by heat, and afterwards collected by condensation. Below the condensing chambers are huge bowls, some of which were still partially filled with the metallic fluid. It was a curious sensation to set your foot into the cold, slippery mass, which, as if disdaining such treatment, rolls off, leaving your boot unsoiled. Huge heaps of cinnabar, of a rich dark-vermilion color, lay idly beside the furnaces. Some specimens, which I ventured to carry away, contained seventy-five per cent of quicksilver.

Before leaving San José, I visited two or three of the pleasant private residences, which, with their gardens and orchards, adorn the outskirts of the town. It seems really incredible that ten years could work such a marvelous change. Instead of a bare, open plain, there were groves and bowers—streets lined with rows of trees, and houses hidden in foliage and blossoms. Fig-trees, laden with their second crop of fruit, encircled the fountain-basins; rustic summer houses, overgrown with fuchsia, passion-flower, and the Australian pea, rose out of thickets of acacia, laurel, and the African tamarack, with its thin, thready foliage; and with

the simple protection of glass, the orange and banana flourished as in the Tropics. A cluster of cottonwoods, planted eight eyars ago, were already fifty feet high, with trunks fifteen inches in diameter! Here, old proverbs fail. A man does not plant an orchard, that his grandchildren may have fruit, or a tree, that his sons may sit beneath its shade: if he can count on five more years of life for himself, he does these things for his own sake.

Now, I ask, where Nature does so much, should we not expect proportionably more from *Man*? The Californians have labored well, it is true, but not so much as they might have done. I am not going to flatter them with unmingled praise. Coming from such a stock, carrying the habits, tastes, and ideas of the older States with them, they could not have accomplished less, without exhibiting a deterioration in character. The material progress of the State is not so much to be wondered at, when we consider that every improvement either *pays*, or is expected to pay. There are fine roads constructed at great expense, all through the mining districts—but ask the teamsters how much toll they pay. There are good bridges everywhere—your purse acknowledges the fact, as well as your eyes. But there is, as yet, no thorough geological survey of the State: the Common School system is far less generally established than it should be: and the population are too bent upon money-making to insist on the proper administration of the laws, which, except in San Francisco, are as loosely and carelessly regarded as in—New York City. The *energy of Selfishness* has worked wonders—but it takes something more to make a State great, wise, and happy.

We determined to return to San Francisco up the eastern shore, through Alameda County, thus making the circuit of the bay. The distance to San Antonio near Oakland, is about forty miles; the fare, if you take a team at a livery stable, is twenty-five dollars—by the stage, it is one dollar. The difference would buy an acre of land: so we took the stage. To avoid the dust, as well as the rough crowd of French laborers,

Chinamen, and Pikes inside, my wife and I climbed to the top of the Concord coach, and established ourselves behind the driver. The morning was overcast and raw: the mountains were drab instead of golden, and the bay indigo instead of purple. To conciliate the driver, I presented him with a cigar, accompanied with a remark. He had a full, handsome face, a military moustache, and a rough courtesy in his manners, emphasized with profane words. I should never have suspected him of being a "Pike," if he had not admitted it. He had been in the country nine years; weighed one hundred and twenty-seven pounds when he came; now weighed one hundred and ninety; used to be sick all the time at home; had the shakes—had 'em *bad*; never had 'em now; was afraid to go home, for fear he should git 'em again. Knowed all about horses; druv 'em so's to go fast, and so's not to hurt 'em nuther. Some —— drivers upshot the stage, goin' over side-hills; —— if he did; passengers might swear 'cause he went slow; *he* knowed what he was about—*he* did. All which latter statements proved to be perfectly true. He was an honest, careful, skilful fellow; and we enjoyed the journey all the more, from our confidence in him.

For some ten miles our road led over the level floor of the valley. The land here appeared to be tolerably well divided into farms, the fields fenced with redwood, regardless of expense, and the most superb orchards and vineyards springing up everywhere. I was glad to see that the fences were all substantial post-and-rail—none of those hideous "worm-fences" which are so common in the Middle and Western States. Redwood timber has a great durability in a moist soil, though it is liable to dry rot elsewhere. Col. Fremont saw a redwood post at the Mission of Dolores, which had been in the ground seventy-five years, and had only rotted to the depth of half an inch. Nearly all the frame houses are built of this timber, and I never saw without pain its rich, *beautiful* natural color—intermediate between that of mahogany and

black walnut—hidden under a coat of paint. If it could be preserved by oil, or a transparent varnish, nothing could be more elegant.

We were obliged to stop at Warm Spring (which lies off the road) on account of the mail. As we slowly climbed the glen, the national flag, flying from a flag-staff which towered above a clump of sycamores and live-oaks, announced the site of the hotel. Here was truly a pleasant retreat. A two-story frame building, with a shady veranda, opening upon a garden of flowers, in the midst of which the misty jet of a fountain fluttered in the wind, vineyards in the rear, and the lofty mountain over all. There must be leisure already in this new world of work, when such places exist.

Three miles further, up and down, crossing the bases of the hills, brought us to the Mission of San José. I found the old Mission intact, but a thriving village had sprung up around it. Its former peaceful seclusion had gone forever: a few natives, with their sarapes and jingling spurs, lounge in the tiled corridors; while, in bar-rooms opposite, the new owners of the land drink bad liquors and chew abominable tobacco. The old garden on the hill has passed into the hands of speculators, and its wealth of figs, pears, and melons is now shipped to San Francisco.

Here I left my trail of 1849, which turned eastward, over the mountains, while our road kept along their base, northward. As the sun came out, the huge stacks of sheaves, in the centre of the immense wheat-fields, flashed like perfect gold. I have never seen grain so clean, so pure and brilliant in color. If the sheaves had been washed with soap-suds and then varnished, they could not have been more resplendent. The eastern shore of the bay is certainly more fertile than the western, and richer in arable land, though it has less timber and less landscape beauty. The land appears to be all claimed (generally in despite of the original proprietors) and nearly all settled.

We now saw the dark line of the Encinal, in front, and

sped onward through clouds of black dust to San Antonio, which we reached at noon. An old friend was in waiting, to convey us to his home in the village of Alameda, two miles distant. We here saw more of the wonders of horticulture—but I am really tired of repeating statements so difficult of belief, and will desist. We spent the afternoon under his live-oaks, bathed in the aroma of giant pears and nectarines, and in the evening returned to San Francisco.

3

A JOURNEY TO THE GEYSERS

A week later, we left San Francisco in a little steamer for Petaluma. I had made arrangements to lecture there on Saturday evening, and in Napa City on Monday evening; and determined to accomplish a visit to the Geysers, in the intervening time, although most of my friends pronounced the thing impossible. Yet, at the same time, they all said: "You must not think of leaving California without seeing the Geysers"—those who had never been there being, as usual, most earnest in their recommendations. It was all new ground to me, as I had seen literally nothing of the north side of the bay during my first visit.

Petaluma is the westernmost of three valleys which, divided by parallel spurs of the Coast Range, open upon the north side of San Pablo Bay. It communicates, with scarce an intervening "divide," with the rich and spacious valley of Russian River—a stream which enters the Pacific at Bodega, some twenty miles north of the Golden Gate, where the Russians once made a settlement. It is thus, virtually, the outlet of this valley to the Bay of San Francisco; and the town of Petaluma, at the head of navigation, bids fair to become

a place of some importance. In 1849, the valley was an Indian rancho, belonging to one of the brothers Vallejo; and the adobe fort, built for protection against the native tribes, is still standing. At present, there is a daily line of steamers thither—a fact which shows that the progress of California is not restricted to the gold-bearing regions.

We passed close under the steep mountain-sides of Angel Island. At the base, there are quarries of very tolerable building-stone, which are extensively worked. Across a narrow strait lay Sausalito, overhung by dark mountains. Here there is a little settlement, whence is brought the best supply of drinking-water for San Francisco. An hour more brought us to Point San Quentin where the State prison is located. In this institution, terms of imprisonment are shortened by wholesale, without the exercise of executive clemency. When the inmates have enjoyed a satisfactory period of rest and seclusion, they join in companies, and fillibuster their way out. During my sojourn in California, forty or fifty of them took possession of a sloop, and were only prevented from escaping, by a discharge of grape-shot, which killed several.

As we approached Black Point, at the mouth of Petaluma Creek, the water of the bay became very shallow and muddy, and our course changed from a right line into a tortuous following of the narrow channel. The mouth of the valley is not more than two miles wide; and the creek, which is a mere tide-water slough, winds its labyrinthine way through an expanse of reedy marshes. To the westward, towers a noble mountain-peak, with groves of live-oak mottling its golden sides; while on the east a lower range of tawny hills divides the valley from that of Sonoma.

The windings of the creek were really bewildering—more than doubling the distance. But there is already enterprise enough to straighten the channel. Gangs of men are at work, cutting across the bends, and in the course of time, the whole aspect of the valley will be changed. We left the steamer at a place called The Haystack, about two miles from Petaluma.

Time is gained by taking an omnibus here, and avoiding the remaining curves of the stream. The town, built on the southern slope of a low hill, makes a very cheerful impression. The main street, built up continuously for near half a mile, slowly climbs the hill—its upper portion overlooking the blocks of neat cottages and gardens in the rear. The houses, of course, are mostly frame; but a beautiful dark-blue lime-stone is rapidly coming into use. The place already contains 2,500 inhabitants, and the air of business and prosperity which it wears is quite striking.

After collecting all possible information concerning the journey to the Geysers, I determined to go on the same night to Santa Rosa, sixteen miles further up the valley. A considerate friend sent a note by the evening stage to Mr. Dickinson, a landlord in Healdsburg (in Russian River Valley), engaging horses for the mountains. I then sought and found a reasonable livery-stable, the proprietor of which furnished me with a two-horse buggy—to be left at Napa City, twenty-four miles distant, on the third day—for \$20. The vehicle was strong, the horses admirable, and I was to be our own driver and guide. I had intended employing a man to act in the latter capacity, until I was told, "You can never find the way alone."

After my evening duty was performed, and the moon had risen, we took our seats in the buggy, well-muffled against the cold night-wind. I was especially warned against this midnight journey to Santa Rosa. People said: "We, who have been over the road, lose the way in going by daylight. How can you find it by night?" But I have my plan of action in such cases. I ask half a dozen men of very different degrees of intelligence, separately, to give me instructions. No matter how much they may differ, there are always certain landmarks which coincide: hold on to these, and let the rest go! Thus, after much questioning, I found out that I must keep a certain main road until I had passed the Magnolia Tavern; then turn to the right around the garden-fence; then cross

a gully; then *not* take a trail to the right; then drive over a wide, fenceless plain; then take the right hand, and mount a hill: and, after I had struck the main fenced road, keep it to Santa Rosa.

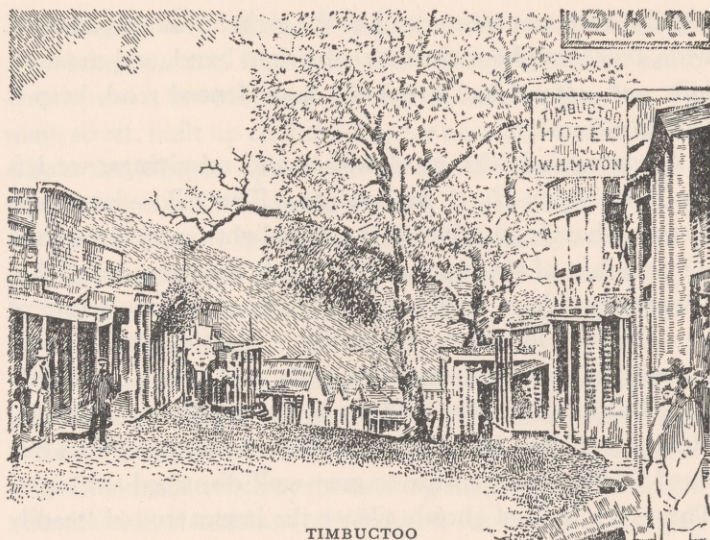
Accompanied with good wishes and misgivings, we left the Washington Hotel, in Petaluma. The yellow landscape shone with a ghastly glare in the moonlight; and the parched soil and dust of the road were so nearly the same color, that I was only able to distinguish the highway by the sound of the wheels. I found the Magnolia, rightly enough; turned around the garden, crossed the gully, and struck out boldly over the dim plain. The cold wind, still raw from the Pacific, blew in our faces, and cheered us with the balsam of the tarweed. No sound of coyote or gray-wolf disturbed the night. Through a land of ghostly silence the horses trotted steadily onward. Up the promised hill; through groves of wizard oaks; past the dark shanties of settlers: with wheels rattling on gravel or muffled in dust; crossing the insteps of hills, and then into an apparently boundless plain—so we dashed until midnight, when we reached a large stream. Thus far we had not seen a living soul; but now, a “solitary horseman” came up behind us.

“Is this the road to Santa Rosa?” I asked.

“You are in Santa Rosa now,” was the reply.

Once over the stream, there lay the village, which the oaks and sycamores had concealed from us.

I thundered vigorously on the door of a tavern; but it was long before there was any answering sound. Finally, the door was opened by a barefooted man, in shirt and trowsers—not growling, as I anticipated, but excessively polite and obliging. Passing through a parlor, with glaring ingrain carpet and hair sofa, he ushered us into a bedroom, bounded on one side by a kitchen, and on the other by a closet, where servant-girls slept. It had evidently been his own room; for the bed was still warm, and no imagination could endow the limp cotton sheets with freshness. The room was disgustingly



TIMBUCTOO

dirty—old clothes, indescribable towels and combs being scattered in the corners. Fortunately, our fatigue was great, and the five hours, sleep (which was all we could take) cut short the inevitable loathing.

Our lodging cost two dollars; our horses the same. Soon after six o'clock, we were under way again—intending to take breakfast at Healdsburg, sixteen miles further. As we got out of the shabby little village of Santa Rosa, I perceived that we were already in Russian River Valley. Its glorious alluvial level, sprinkled with groves of noble trees, extended far and wide before us—bounded, on the west, by the blue mountains of the coast. The greater part of the land was evidently claimed, and the series of fenced and cultivated fields on either side of the road was almost uninterrupted. It was melancholy to see how wantonly the most beautiful trees in the world had been destroyed; for the world has never seen such oaks as grow in Russian River Valley. The fields of girdled and blackened skeletons seemed doubly hideous by contrast with the glory of the surviving trees. Water seems to be more abundant in this valley than in that of San José:

the picturesque windmill is not a feature in the landscape. The settlers are mostly Pikes; but one man, of whom I asked the way, rather puzzled me, at first. His shaggy brown hair, flat nose, and Calmuck nostrils, led me to suspect that he might be a Russian remnant of the old settlement of Bodega. After trying Spanish and German without success, I was vainly straining after a Russian phrase, when he suddenly addressed me in French. His patois, however, was harsh and barbarous, and I set him down for a Basque or a Breton.

The valley gradually narrowed to a breadth of five or six miles; the mountains became more densely wooded; imperial sycamores lifted their white arms over the heads of the oaks; and tall, dark redwoods towered like giants along the slopes and summits. The landscapes were of ravishing beauty—a beauty not purchased at the expense of any material advantage; for nothing could exceed the fertility of the soil. Indian corn, which thrives but moderately elsewhere in California, here rivalled the finest fields of the West. The fields of wild oats mocked the results of artificial culture; and the California boast, of making walking-canes of the stalks, seemed to be scarcely exaggerated. Then, as we approached Russian River, what a bowery luxuriance of sycamores, bay trees, shrubbery, and climbing vines! What wonderful vistas of foliage, starry flowers, and pebbly reaches, mirrored in the sparkling water! It was a kindred picture to that of the Valley of the Alpheus, in Greece, but far richer in coloring.

Such scenery was not to be enjoyed without payment. There was beauty around, but there was dust below. After crossing the river, our wheels sank into a foot of dry, black powder, which spun off the tires in terrific clouds. It was blinding, choking, annihilating; and the only way to escape it was, to drive with such rapidity that you were past before it reached the level of your head. But under the dust were invisible ruts and holes; and the faster you drove, the more liable you were to snap some bolt or spring, by a sudden wrench. Less than a mile of such travel, however, brought us to the outskirts of

Healdsburg. This town—which is only two years old, and numbers six or eight hundred inhabitants—is built in a forest of fir and pine trees. The houses seem to spring up faster than the streets can be laid out, with the exception of an open square in the centre—a sort of public trading-ground and forum, such as you see in the Slavonic villages of Eastern Europe. Wild and backwoodsy as the place appeared, it was to us the welcome herald of breakfast.

The note dispatched from Petaluma had had the desired effect. Mr. Dickinson had gone on to Ray's tavern, at the foot of the mountains, with the saddle-horses; and his partner soon supplied us with an excellent meal. The road to Ray's was described as being rough, and hard to find; but as the distance was only eight or nine miles, and my instructions were intelligibly given, I determined to take no guide. There are settlements along Russian River, almost to its source—some seventy or eighty miles above Healdsburg; and still beyond the valley, as you go northward, extends a succession of others, lying within the arms of the Coast Range, as far as Trinity River. They are said to be wonderfully fertile and beautiful, and those which are not appropriated as Indian reservations, are rapidly filling up with settlers. As there are no good harbors on the coast between Bodega and Humboldt, much of the intercourse between this region and the Bay of San Francisco must be carried on by the way of Petaluma and the Russian River. The sudden rise of Healdsburg is thus accounted for.

Resuming our journey, we traveled for four or five miles through scenery of the most singular beauty. To me, it was an altogether new variety of landscape. Even in California, where Nature presents so many phases, there is nothing like it elsewhere. Fancy a country composed of mounds from one to five hundred feet in height, arranged in every possible style of grouping, or piled against and upon each other, yet always rounded off with the most wonderful smoothness and grace—not a line but curves as exquisitely as the loins of the antique

Venus—covered with a short, even sward of golden grass, and studded with trees—singly, in clumps, or in groves—which surpass, in artistic perfection of form, all other trees that grow! “This,” said I, “is certainly the last-created portion of our planet. Here the Divine Architect has lingered over His work with reluctant fondness, giving it the final caressing touches with which He pronounced it good.”

Indeed, our further journey seemed to be through some province of dream-land. As the valley opened again, and our course turned eastward toward the group of lofty mountains in which Pluton River lies hidden, visions of violet peaks shimmered afar, through the perfect trees. Headlands crowned with colossal redwood were thrust forward from the ranges on either hand, embaying between them the loveliest glens. The day was cloudless, warm, and calm, with barely enough of breeze to shake the voluptuous spice from the glossy bay-leaves. After crossing Russian River a second time—here a broad bed of dry pebbles—we found fields and farm-houses. The road was continually crossed by deep *arroyos*, in and out of which our horses plunged with remarkable dexterity. The smaller gullies were roughly bridged with loose logs, covered with brush. We were evidently approaching the confines of civilization.

I missed the road but once, and then a cart-track through the fields soon brought me back again. At noon, precisely, we reached Ray's—a little shanty in a valley at the foot of Geyser Peak. Thence we were to proceed on horseback to the region of wonders.

Ray's Tavern (or stable) is only twelve miles from the Geysers; yet we should find these miles, we were told, longer than the forty we had traveled. Some of our friends had given us threatening pictures of the rocks, precipices, and mountain-heights to be overcome. It was fortunate that the horses had been ordered in advance; for Ray's is a lonely place, and we might otherwise have been inconveniently delayed. Mr. Dickinson and an Indian boy were the only inhabitants.

There was a bar, with bottles, a piece of cheese, and a box of soda-crackers, in one room, and a cot in the other.

Presently, our horses were led up to the door. Mine was a dilapidated mustang, furnished with one of those Mexican saddles which are so easy in the seat and so uneasy in the stirrups (on mountain roads); while my wife received a gray mare, recommended as an admirable creature; and so she was—with the exception of a blind eye, a sore back, and a habit of stumbling. "You can't miss the trail," said Mr. Dickinson—which, in fact, we didn't. Starting off, merrily, alone, up a little cañon behind the tavern, with the noonday sun beating down fiercely upon our backs, it was not long before we breathed a purer air than that of the valley, and received a fresher inspiration from the richly-tinted panorama which gradually unfolded before us.

The high, conical peak, behind which lay the Geysers, and the lower slopes of which we were ascending, was called Monte de las Putas, by the Spaniards; but is now, fortunately, likely to lose that indecent appellation, and return to respectability, as Geyser Peak. Its summit is 3,800 feet above the sea, and distinctly visible from the Bay of San Francisco. Eastward, across an intervening valley, rises the blue bulk of Mount St. Helene, 5,000 feet high; while, to the West and South, the valley of Russian River, which here makes an abrupt curve, spread wide below us—a dazzling picture of warmth, life, and beauty, covered as with a misty violet-bloom. Our road was shaded with pines and oaks, with an undergrowth of buckeye and *manzanita*. The splendid forms of the trees were projected with indescribable effect against the yellow harvest which mantled the mountain-sides. The *madrono*, elsewhere a shrub, here becomes a magnificent tree, constantly charming the eye with its trunk of bronze, its branches of copper, and its leaves of supernatural green.

Ascending gradually for a mile and a half, we reached the top of the first terrace or abutment of the mountain-chain. Here stood a shanty, near a spring which suddenly

oozed out of the scorched soil. Half-a-dozen used-up horses were trying to get a drink, and a herd of at least four hundred sheep was gathered together under the immense spreading boughs of some evergreen oaks; but settlers and shepherds were absent. I rode up to the window; but a curtain of blue calico, placed there to exclude the sun and flies, baffled my curiosity.

We now followed the top of the ridge for three or four miles, by a broad and beautiful trail marked with cart-wheels. A pleasant breeze blew from the opposite height, and the clumps of giant madronos and pines shielded us from the sun. As we cantered lightly along, our eyes rested continually on the wonderful valley below. The landscape, colossal in its forms, seemed to lie motionless, leagues deep, at the bottom of an ocean of blue air. The atmosphere, transparent as ever, was palpable as glass, from its depth of color. No object lost its distinctness, but became part of an unattainable, though not unreal world. The same feeling was excited, as when, leaning over a boat in some crystal cove of the tropical sea, I have watched the dells and valleys of the coral forests below. Across a deep hollow on our right, splendidly robed in forests, rose Geyser Peak, covered to the summit with purple *chamisal*. I am afraid to describe the effect of this scenery. It was a beauty so exquisite, a harmony so complete, as to take away the effect of reality, and our enjoyment was of that supreme character which approaches the sense of pain.

Finally we descended into the hollow, which narrowed to an abrupt gorge, losing itself between steep mountain walls. Masses of black volcanic rock, among which grew Titanic pines, gave the place a wild, savage air, but the bottom of the gorge was a bower of beauty. An impetuous stream of crystal water plunged down it, overhung by a wilderness of maples, plane-trees, and deciduous oaks. As we were about to cross, a wild figure on horseback dashed out of the thicket. It was a Pike boy of fourteen, on a Mexican saddle, with calzoneros, leather-gaiters, and a lasso in his hand. "Have

you seen a stray cow?" he shouted. We had been looking at something else than cows. "'Cause," he added, "one of ourn's missin'. You're goin' to the springs, I reckon? Well, I'm goin's fur's the Surveyor's Camp." He had been four years in the country. His father lived in the valley, but sent cattle upon the hills to pasture. "Lost cattle reg'lar. Grizzlies eat 'em sometimes—still it *paid*. What was them trees?—*matheeroons* (madronos)." "Like California?" "Yes. Didn't want to go back, nohow. Didn't want a cigar—*chawed*;" as a dexterous squirt of brown juice over his horse's head proved. Such was the information elicited by my questioning.

Meanwhile we had been gradually regaining the summit of the ridge beyond the gorge; riding under broad-leaved oaks, which reminded me of the Erymanthean forests. Presently there opened the most unexpected picture. A circular meadow of green turf, the peak on our right, golden and purple to its summit; an oak-knoll on the left, dotted with white tents, with picketed horses, men lying in the shade, and all the other picturesque accessories of a camp. It was the headquarters of Capt. Davidson, of the Coast Survey—evidently a man of taste as well as science. The repose was tempting, especially to my companion, to whom rough mountain travel was a new thing; but we had no time to lose, for there were the Geysers before us, and a journey of sixty miles on the morrow. A *made* trail, engineered up the steep by easy windings, led us to a height of 3,200 feet above the sea; whence the unknown realms behind Geyser Peak became visible, and we turned our backs on Russian River Valley.

It was a wild region upon which we now entered. Sheer down slid the huge mountain-sides, to depths unknown, for they were concealed by the thick-set pillars of the fir and redwood. Opposite rose heights equally abrupt; over their almost level line, the blue wall of a chain beyond, and scattered peaks in the dimmest distance. The intervening gorges ran from east to west, but that immediately below us was divided by a narrow partition-wall, which crossed it transversely, con-

necting the summits of the two chains. Over this wall our road lay. The golden tint of the wild oats was gone from the landscape. The mountains were covered to the summits with dense masses of furze, chamisal, laurel, and manzanita, painting them with gorgeous purples, yellows, browns, and greens. For the hundredth time I exclaimed, "What a country for an artist!"

On the sharp comb of the transverse connecting-wall over which we rode, there was barely room for the trail. It was originally next to impassable, but several thousand dollars expended in cutting chapparal, blasting rocks, and bridging chasms, have made it secure and easy. The carcass of a calf, killed by a girzzly bear a few days before, lay beside the path. We also passed a tethered mule, with a glimpse of somebody asleep under a rock; after which, the silence and solitude was complete.

We reached the opposite ridge with feelings of relief—not from any dangers passed, but because we knew that Pluton River must lie in the gorge beyond, and we were excessively fatigued and hungry. The sky between the distant peaks became so clear as to indicate that a considerable depression lay below it, and I conjectured (rightly, as it proved,) that this must be Clear Lake. Looking down into the gulf below us, I noticed only that while the side upon which we stood was covered with magnificent forests, the opposite or northern steep was comparatively bare, and the deep gullies which seamed it showed great patches of yellow and orange-colored earth near the bottom. But no sound was to be heard, no column of vapor to be seen. Indeed, the bottom of the gorge was invisible, from the steepness of its sides.

Straight down went the trail, descending a thousand feet in the distance of a mile. It was like riding down the roof of a Gothic church. The horses planted themselves on their fore feet, and in some places slid, rather than walked. The jolts, or shocks, with which they continually brought up, jarred us in every joint. Superb as was the forest around, lovely as

were the glimpses into the wild dells on either side, we scarcely heeded them, but looked forward at every turn for the inn which was to bring us comfort. At last we saw the river, near at hand. The trail, notched along the side of its precipitous banks, almost overhung it, and a single slip would have sent horse and rider into its bed. Ha! here is a row of bathing shanties. A thin thread of steam puffs out of a mound of sulphur-colored earth, opposite. Is that all? was my first dolorous query—followed by the reflection: if there were nothing here, we have still been a thousand times repaid. But—there comes the hotel at last!

It was a pleasant frame building of two stories, surrounded with spacious verandas. Patriarchal oaks shaded the knoll on which it stood, and the hot river roared over volcanic rocks below. A gentleman, sitting tilted against a tree, quietly scrutinized us. While I was lifting my helpless companion from the saddle, an Indian ostler took the beasts, and an elegant lady in a black-velvet basque and silk skirt came forward to receive us. I was at a loss how to address her, until the unmistakable brogue and manners betrayed the servant-gal. She conducted us to the baths, and then assumed a graceful position on a rock until we had washed away the aches of our bones in the liquid sulphur. A pipe, carried from a spring across the river, supplies the baths, which have a temperature of about 100 degrees. In their vicinity is a cold spring, strongly impregnated with iron.

The bath, a lunch, and a bottle of good claret, restored us so thoroughly, that my wife declared her ability to make the tour of the Geysers at once. In the meantime, Mr. Godwin, the proprietor of the hotel and the adjacent Pandemonium, arrived with Capt. Davidson, who had been endeavoring to ascertain the temperature of the steam. The former was kind enough to be our guide, and we set out immediately, for the remaining hour and a half of daylight was barely sufficient for the undertaking. The Geysers lie in a steep little lateral cañon, the mouth of which opens on Pluton river, exactly

opposite the hotel. The best way to visit them is, to enter the bottom of this cañon, and so gradually climb to the top. Many persons, ladies especially, are deterred from attempting it, but there is nothing very difficult or dangerous in the feat. The air of the valley is strongly flavored with sulphur, but beyond this fact, and the warmth of the stream, there are no indications of the phenomena near at hand.

Mr. Godwin first showed us an iron spring, in a rude natural basin among the rocks. The water is so strongly ferruginous, that a thick, red scum gathers on the top of it, and the stones around are tinted a deep crimson. A little further there is an alkaline spring, surrounded with bubbling jets of sulphur. The water becomes warmer as we climb, the air more stifling, and the banks of the ravine higher, more ragged in form, and more glaringly marked with dashes of fiery color. Here and there are rocky chambers, the sides of which are incrustated with patches of sulphur crystals, while in natural pigeon-holes are deposits of magnesia, epsom salts, and various alkaline mixtures. One of these places is called the Devil's Apothecary Shop. Hot sulphur springs become more frequent, gushing up wherever a little vent-hole can be forced through the rocks. The ground grows warm under our feet, and a light steam begins to arise from the stream. The path is very steep, slippery, and toilsome.

After passing several hot springs, impregnated with epsom salts and magnesia, we come, finally, to the region where sulphur maintains a diabolical pre-eminence. The trees which shade the ravine in the lower part of its course, now disappear. All vegetation is blasted by the mixture of powerful vapors. The ground is hot under your feet: you hear the bubbling of boiling springs, and are half choked by the rank steam that arises from them. From bubbling, the springs at the bases of the rocks gradually change to jetting, in quick, regular throbs, yet—what is most singular in this glen of wonders—no two of them precisely alike. Some are intermittently weak and strong, like a revolving light; some are rapid

and short, others exhale long, fluttering pants or sighs, and others again have a double, reciprocal motion, like the sistole and diastole of the heart. In one you fancy you detect the movement of a subterranean piston-rod. They have all received fantastic names, suggested by their mode of working.

With the light bubbling and sputtering of these springs, and the dash of the boiling brook, there now mingles a deeper sound. Above us are the gates of the great chamber, whose red, burnt walls we dimly see through volumes of whirling steam—nothing else is visible. We walk in a sticky slush of sulphur, which burns through the soles of our boots; we gasp for breath as some fiercer whiff drives across our faces. A horrible mouth yawns in the black rock, belching forth tremendous volumes of sulphurous vapor. Approaching as near as we dare, and looking in, we see the black waters boiling in mad, pitiless fury, foaming around the sides of their prison, spirting in venomous froth over its jagged lips, and sending forth a hoarse, hissing, almost howling sound. This is the Witches' Caldron. Its temperature, as approximately ascertained by Capt. Davidson, is about 500 degrees. An egg dipped in and taken out is boiled; and were a man to fall in, he would be reduced to broth in two minutes.

Climbing to a little rocky point above this caldron, we pause to take breath and look around. This is the end of the cañon—the gulf of perdition in which it takes its rise. The torn, irregular walls around us glare with patches of orange, crimson, sulphur, livid gray, and fiery brown, which the last rays of the sun, striking their tops, turn into masses of smouldering fire. Over the rocks, crusted as with a mixture of blood and brimstone, pour angry cataracts of seething milky water. In every corner and crevice, a little piston is working or a heart is beating, while from a hundred vent-holes about fifty feet above our heads, the steam rushes in terrible jets. I have never beheld any scene so entirely infernal in its appearance. The rocks burn under you; you are enveloped in fierce heat, strangled by puffs of diabolical vapor, and stunned by the

awful hissing, spitting, sputtering, roaring, threatening sounds—as if a dozen steamboats blowing through their escape-pipes, had aroused the ire of ten-thousand hell-cats. You seem to have ventured into a prohibited realm. The bubbling pulses of the springs throb in angry excitement, the great vents overhead blow warning trumpets, and the black caldron darts up frothy arms to clutch and drag you down.

I was rather humiliated, that I alone, of all the party, was made faint and sick by the vapors. We thereupon climbed the “fiery Alps,” crushing the brittle sulphur crystals, and slipping on the steep planes of hot mud, until we reached the top, whence there is a more agreeable, but less impressive view of the pit. I here noticed that the steam rushes from the largest of the vent-holes with such force, and heated to such a degree, that it first becomes visible at the distance of six feet from the earth. It there begins to mix with the air, precipitate its moisture, and increases in volume to the height of eighty feet. In the morning, when the atmosphere is cool, the columns rise fully two hundred feet. These tremendous steam-escapes are the most striking feature of the place. The term “Geysers” is incorrect: there is no spouting, as in the springs of Iceland—no sudden jets, with pauses of rest between: yet the phenomena are not less curious. Mr. Godwin informed me that the amount of steam discharged is greater during the night than by day, and in winter than in summer. I presume, however, that this is only a difference in the *visible* amount, depending on the temperature of the air—the machinery working constantly at the same rate of pressure.

A short distance to the east is another cluster of pulsating springs, on the side of the hill. Here the motions are again different, and present some curious appearances. In one place are two pistons working against each other; in another, a whirling motion, like that produced by the blades of a propeller. Still further up the valley are other springs, which we had no time to visit. The accounts heretofore published are very incorrect. No appreciable difference in the temperature

of the valley is occasioned by these springs. The hotel is 1800 feet above the sea, and snow falls in the winter. The abundance of maples and deciduous oaks shows the same decrease of warmth as is elsewhere observed at the same height. The plan of planting tropical trees on the sides of the cañon, which I have seen mentioned in the California newspapers, is preposterous. No vegetation can exist within the limits of the heated soil.

Sunset was fading from the tops of the northern hills, as we returned to the hotel. The wild, lonely grandeur of the valley—the contrast of its Eden-like slopes of turf and forest, with those ravines of Tartarus—charmed me completely, and I would willingly have passed weeks in exploring its recesses. A stage-road is to be made over the mountain, but I should prefer not to be among the first passengers. One man, they say, has already driven across in his buggy—a feat which I could not believe to be possible. The evening before our arrival, a huge grizzly bear walked past the hotel, and the haunch of a young one, killed the same day, formed part of our dinner. In the evening I sat in the veranda, enjoying the moonlight and Capt. Davidson's stories of his adventures among the coast tribes, until thoroughly overcome by sleep and fatigue.

At sunrise, the hissing and roaring was distinctly audible across the valley. The steam rose in broad, perpendicular columns, to an immense height. There was no time for another visit, however, for we were obliged to reach Napa City the same evening, and by seven o'clock were in our saddles. The morning air was fragrant with bay and aromatic herbs as we climbed the awful steep. A sweet wind whispered in the pines, and the mountains, with their hues of purple and green and gold, basked in glorious sunshine. In spite of the rough trail and rougher horses, we got back to Ray's in three hours and forty minutes. My companion dropped from the saddle into a chair, unable to move. Mr. Dickinson, with kindly forethought, had provided some melons, and I think I was never refreshed with more cold and luscious hydromel.

4

A STRUGGLE TO KEEP AN APPOINTMENT

The change from our bone-racking saddle-horses to the light, easy buggy and span of fast blacks, made the commencement of our journey a veritable luxury, in spite of the heat and dust. Our road led up a lateral arm of Russian River Valley, extending eastward toward the foot of Mount St. Helene. Though the country was but thinly settled, there was more than one stately two-story farmhouse standing, with a lordly air, in its natural park of oaks, and we passed—what I had been longing to see—a schoolhouse. The few cultivated fields were fenced without regard to expense—or, rather, with a proper regard to their bountiful harvests—yet the trees, whose slaughter we had lamented, further down the valley, were generously spared. The oaks were hung with streamers of silver-gray moss, from one to three feet long, and resembling, in texture, the finest point-lace. So airy and delicate was this ornament, that the groves through which we passed had nothing of that sombre, weeping character which makes the cypress swamps of the South so melancholy. Here they were decked as if for a bridal, and slept in languid, happy beauty, in the lap of the golden hills.

More than once, the road was arbitrarily cut off, and turned from its true course, by the fencing in of new fields. This was especially disagreeable where a cove of level bottom land had been thus inclosed, and we were forced to take the hill-side, where the wheels slipped slowly along, one side being dangerously elevated above the other. I was informed (whether truly or not I cannot say) that the county has never yet located a single road—consequently, the course of the highways is wholly at the mercy of the settlers, each of whom makes whatever changes his interest or convenience may suggest. A mile of side-hill was sometimes inflicted upon us,

when a difference of ten yards would have given us a level floor. Our horses, however, were evidently accustomed to these peculiarities, and went on their way with a steadiness and cheerfulness which I had never seen equalled.

Still more remarkable was their intelligent manner of crossing the deep *arroyos* which we encountered near the head of the valley. There were rarely any bridges. The road plunged straight down the precipitous side of the gully, and then immediately mounted at the same angle. As we commenced the descent, the horses held back until they seemed to stand on their fore-feet, poising the buggy as a juggler poises a chair on his chin. When half way down, they cautiously yielded to the strain, sprang with a sudden impetus that took away one's breath, cleared the bottom, and, laying hold of the opposite steep as if their hoofs had been hands, scrambled to the top before the vehicle had time to recover its weight by wholly losing the impulsions. Even my inexperienced companion, to whom these descents seemed at first so perilous, was soon enabled to make them with entire confidence in the sagacity of the noble animals.

In one instance, they showed a self-possession almost human. We came to an *arroyo*, which, at first sight, appeared to be impassable. It was about forty feet deep, the sides dropping at an angle of forty-five degrees, and meeting in a pool of water at the bottom. Down we went, with a breathless rush; but, fearing that the sudden change from the line of descent to that of ascent might snap some bolt in the vehicle, I checked the speed of the horses more than was prudent. We were but half way up the other side, when the buggy recovered its weight, and began to drag back. They felt, instantaneously, the impossibility of bringing it to the top; stopped; backed, with frightful swiftness, to the bottom, and a yard or two up the side they had just descended; then, leaping forward, in a sort of desperate fury, throwing themselves almost flat against the steep, every glorious muscle quivering with its tension, they whirled us to the summit. I

felt my blood flush and my nerves tingle, as if I had witnessed the onset of a forlorn hope.

Finally, the valley, growing narrower, wholly lost itself in a labyrinth of low, steeply-rounded, wooded hills. The road, following the dry bed of a stream, was laboriously notched in the sides of these elevations. There was barely room for a single vehicle, and sometimes the hub of one wheel would graze the perpendicular bank, while the tire of the other rolled on the very brink of the gulf below us. The chasms were spanned by the rudest kind of corduroy bridges. Bad and dangerous as the road was, it was really a matter of surprise that there should have been any road at all. The cost of the work must have been considerable, as the cañon is nearly two miles in length. I had every confidence in the sagacity of our horses, and knew that our vehicle could safely go where a settler's cart had already gone; but there was one emergency, the possibility of which haunted me until my nerves fairly trembled. What if we should *meet* another vehicle in this pass! No turning out, no backing, often not even the chance of lowering one of them by ropes until the other could pass! The turnings were so sharp and frequent, that it was impossible to see any distance ahead; and I approached every corner with a temporary suspension of breath. Suddenly, in the heart of the cañon, where the bays exhaled thick fragrance in the hot air, a dust arose, and horses' heads appeared from behind a rock. My heart jumped into my mouth for an instant, then—riders, thank Heaven!

"Is there a team behind you?" I cried.

"I think not," said one of them. "Hurry on, and you're safe!"

The pass opened into a circular valley, behind which towered, in the east, the stupendous bulk of Mount St. Helene. This peak received its name from the Russian settlers, as a compliment to the Grand-Duchess Helene. It is generally called St. Helena by the Americans—who, of all people, have least sense of the fitness of names. The mountain, 5,000

feet high, rises grandly above all the neighboring chains. As seen from this point, its outline strikingly resembles that of a recumbent female figure hidden under a pall of purple velvet. It suggests to your mind Coreggio's Magdalen, and a statue of St. Cecilia in one of the churches of Rome. The head is raised and propped on the folded arms; the line of the back swells into the full, softly-rounded hip, and then sweeps away downward in the rich curve of the thigh. Only this Titaness is robed in imperial hues. The yellow mountains around are pale by contrast, and the forests of giant redwood seem but the bed of moss on which rests her purple drapery.

It was now past noon, and still a long way to Napa City, where I had engaged to lecture in the evening. I supposed, however, that we were already in Napa Valley, with all the rough and difficult part of the road behind us. Driving up to the first settler's shanty I accosted a coarse, sunburnt fellow, who was making a *corral* for pigs and cattle.

"How far to Napa?"

"Well (scratching his head), I don't exactly know."

"Is this Napa Valley?" I then asked.

"No," he answered; "this is Knight's Valley. You've got to pass Knight's afore you come to Napa."

Presently, another man came up with a lasso in his hand, and stated, with a positive air of knowledge that was refreshing, that we had thirty miles to go. In doubtful cases, however, I never trust to a single informant; and this was the result of my inquiries in passing through Knight's Valley:

Head of valley	.	.	.	.	(to Napa City)	30 miles
A mile further	.	.	.	.	" "	27 "
Half mile	.	.	.	.	" "	35 "
One mile	.	.	.	.	" "	45 "
One-fourth mile	.	.	.	.	" "	40(!) "

After this, I gave up the attempt in despair, being satisfied that I was upon the right road, and that if the place could be reached, I should reach it. At Knight's, near the eastern end of the valley, we found a company of emigrants, who had

just crossed the plains, and were hastening on, dusty and way-worn, to settle on Russian River. The men were greasing the wheels of their carts, while the younger children unhitched and watered the horses. The former had a sullen, unfriendly look—the result of fatigue and privation. An emigrant, at the close of such a journey, is the least social, the least agreeable of men. He is in a bad humor with the world, with life, and with his fellowmen. Let him alone; in another year, when his harsh experience has been softened by memory, the latent kindness of his nature returns—unless he be an incorrigible Pike. Nothing struck me more pleasantly, during this trip, than the uniform courtesy of the people whom we met.

Crossing an almost imperceptible divide, after leaving Knight's, we found ourselves in Napa Valley. The scenery wore a general resemblance to that of Russian River, but was, if possible, still more beautiful. Mount St. Helene formed a majestic rampart on the north; the mountain-walls on either hand were higher, more picturesquely broken, and more thickly wooded; the oaks rising from the floor of the valley, were heavier, more ancient—some of them, in fact, absolutely colossal—and fir-trees two hundred feet in height rose out of the dark glens. A wide smooth highway, unbroken by arroyos, carried us onward through Druid groves, past orchards of peach and fig, farm-cottages nestled in roses, fields and meadows, and the sunny headlands of the mountains. It was a region of ravishing beauty, and brought back, lovelier than before, the day-dreams which had haunted me in the valley of San José.

As the valley grew broader, and settlements became more frequent, we encountered the old plague of dust. The violet mountains, the golden fields, even the arching avenues of the evergreen oaks vanished in the black cloud, which forced me to close my eyes, and blindly trust to the horses. To add to our discomfort, we were obliged to pass drove after drove of cattle, each enveloped in almost impenetrable darkness. But

my gallant blacks whirled on, in spite of it, and at sunset we reached a gate with the inscription "OAK KNOLL"—the welcome buoy which guided us into our harbor for the night.

Oak Knoll is the residence of Mr. Osborne, one of the largest farmers and most accomplished horticulturists in California. His ranche of 1600 acres is on the western side of the valley, four miles north of Napa City. It is a princely domain, as it comes from the hands of Nature, and its owner has sufficient taste not to meddle unnecessarily with her work. The majestic oaks she has nurtured for centuries form a splendid irregular avenue for the carriage road to his house, which stands upon the mound she placed for it, sheltered by the mountains behind, and overlooking the valley in front—no glaring mass of brick, or Grecian temple with a kitchen attached, but a quaint wooden structure, full of queer corners and gables, which seemed to have grown by gradual accretion. Its quiet gray tint, framed in dark green foliage, was a pleasant relief to the eye, after looking on the dazzling colors of the fields and hills.

After riding to Napa City and back again to Oak Knoll in the misty night-air, I felt satisfied with the day's work—twelve miles of mountain-climbing, fifty-five in a vehicle, and one lecture (equal, under the circumstances, to fifteen more!). The next evening, however, was appropriated to San Francisco, involving another journey of nearly equal extent. So, with the first streak of dawn, I tore my bruised body from the delicious embrace of the bed, and prepared to leave the castle. The steamer to San Francisco left Napa on alternate days, and Tuesday was not one of them. There was no other way, then, but to drive to Benicia, cross the Straits of Carquinez, take a fresh team to Oakland, and catch the last ferry-boat across the Bay. It was a difficult undertaking, but it was *possible*. Mr. Osborne, to whom there is no such word as "fail," started us off with a cheering prediction and a basket of his choicest fruit. The five dusty miles to Napa City soon lay behind us, and I left my Petaluma team at a livery stable, in good condition.

The distance to Benicia was estimated at twenty-two miles. It was necessary that I should reach there by eleven o'clock, as the ferry-boat only makes a trip every two hours. I asked for a two-horse buggy and driver, which the stablekeeper refused, on the ground that there was no use for it. A less expensive team would do the business. He produced a tall, clean-limbed dun mare, which he said would "put you through." I could drive, myself, and leave the team in Benicia. Ten dollars. There was really no time to make any other arrangement, so I acquiesced—wondering why it is that the liverymen in California always prefer to let you drive to your destination, and then go to the trouble of sending for the team. I never obtained a driver—though I always offered to pay especially for one—without reluctance.

It was half-past eight when we were fairly seated and in motion. Napa City, by daylight, resembles any young Western "city"—which means, a very moderate specimen of a village. There were two or three blocks of low houses, brick and frame, ambitiously stuck against each other, so as to present a metropolitan appearance—outside of these a belt of frame cottages inserted in small garden-plots, with here and there the ostentatious two-story residence of the original speculator and the "head-merchant," surmounted by a square pigeon-box, called an "observatory"—we all know how such a place looks. The population is about eight hundred, and not likely to increase very fast, as the region supplied from this point does not extend beyond the valley. Just below the town, Napa Creek terminates in a tide-water slough, which enters the Bay of San Pablo near Mare Island, forming a channel for vessels of light draught. Tulé swamps, forming at first narrow belts on both sides of this slough, gradually widen as you descend the valley until, at its mouth, they usurp nearly the whole of its surface.

It was impossible to lose the road, I was told. I therefore drove on boldly, occupied with getting the dun mare gradually warmed up to her best speed, until I noticed that we had

entered a lateral valley, which lost itself in a deep cañon between two mountains to the eastward. The road was broad and well-traveled; but after proceeding two miles, it split into several branches. I began to suspect that we were on the wrong trail, and therefore hailed two women who were washing clothes near a shanty. They pointed to the main branch, which, I could see, climbed the mountain, assuring me that it was the road to Suscol—the first stage on the way to Benicia. The broad slope of the mountain was covered with a stream of lava, from an eruption thousands of years ago. The rough blocks had been cleared away from the road, but the ascent was still very toilsome. Twisted live-oaks partly shaded the highway; above us towered the mountain, bare and yellow, while the cañon on our left, sank suddenly into a gulf of blue vapor. It was a singularly wild and picturesque spot, and I marvelled that my friends had made no mention of it.

From the summit we had a prospect of great beauty. All Napa Valley, bounded to the west by the range which divides it from Sonoma, lay at our feet—the transparent golden hue of the landscape changing through lilac into violet as it was swallowed up in the airy distance. The white houses of the town gleamed softly in the centre of the picture. I gave our animal but a short breathing-spell, and hurried on, expecting to find a divide, and a valley beyond, opening southward toward the Straits of Carquinez. I was doomed, however, to disappointment. There was no divide; the road became very rough and irregular, with side-hill sections, as it wound among the folded peaks. We passed the shanty of a settler, but nobody was at home—the tents and wagons of an emigrant party, deserted, although recently-washed shirts and petticoats hung on the bushes; and, to crown all, no one was abroad in the road. Presently, side-trails began to branch off into the glens; the main trail, which I kept, became fainter, and finally—two miles further—terminated altogether in front of a lonely cabin!

A terrible misgiving seized me. To miss one's way is dis-

agreeable under any circumstances; but to miss it when every minute is of value, is one of those misfortunes which gives us a temporary disgust toward life. I sprang from the buggy, halloed, tried the doors—all in vain. "O ye generation of vipers!" I cried; "are ye never at home?" Delay was equally impracticable; so I turned the horse's head, and drove rapidly back. A boy of eighteen, who came down one of the glens on horseback, thought we were on the right road, but wasn't *sure*. At last I espied a shanty at a little distance; and, leaving the buggy, hastened thither across a ploughed field, taking six furrows at a stride. A homely woman, with two upper teeth, was doing some washing under a live-oak. "Which is the road to Benicia?" I gasped. "Lord bless you!" she exclaimed, "where did you come from?" I pointed to the cañon. "Sakes alive! that's just right wrong! Why didn't you keep to the left? Now you've got to go back to Napa, least-ways close on to it, and then go down the valley, follerin' the telegraph poles."

Talk of a "sinking of the heart!" My midriff gave way with a crash, and the heart fell a thousand leagues in a second. I became absolutely sick with the despairing sense of failure. Here we were, in the mountains, seven miles from Napa, all of which must be retraced. It was a doubtful chance whether we could reach Benicia in season for the next ferry-boat, at 1 p.m.—and then, how were we to cross the mountains to Oakland (twenty-five miles) by 5 p.m.? It had been my boast that I *always* kept my appointments. During the previous winter I had lectured 135 times in six months without making a failure. I had ridden all night in a buggy, chartered locomotives, spent, in some instances, more than I received, but always kept the appointment. I had assured my doubting friends in San Francisco that nothing short of an earthquake should prevent me from returning in season: yet here I was, at ten o'clock in the forenoon, with sixty-six miles of mountains, bays and straits to be overcome! The merchant who loses half his fortune by an unlucky venture

is a cheerful man, if his sensations could be measured with mine.

I do not know whether other lecturers experience the same weight of responsibility. If they do, there is no more anxious and unhappy class of men. The smallest part of the disappointment, in case of failure, falls upon the lecturer himself. In the first place, the evening has been chosen by the association which engages him, with a nice regard to pecuniary success. Nothing else must interfere, to divide the attendance of the public. In the second place, five hundred, or a thousand, or three thousand people, as the case may be, hurry their tea, or decline invitations, or travel many miles, in order to attend; they "come early to secure good seats," wait an hour or two—the dreariest of all experiences—and then go home. It is no agreeable sensation to be responsible for the disappointment of one individual; multiply this by a thousand, and you will have the sum total of my anxiety and distress.

Back again, through the wild cañon; down the steep, whence the landscape, so sunny before, now looked dark and wintry; over the bed of lava; across the bottom-land and over the hill we went—until, just in the outskirts of Napa City, we found the telegraph poles and a broad road leading down the valley. Two hours and a half were still left us for the twenty-two miles. The dun mare was full of spirit, and I began to pluck up a little spirit also. Rolling along over low, treeless hills, we reached Suscol (five miles) in half an hour. The dun mare whisked her tail and stretched out her head; her hoofs beat a lively tattoo on the hard, dry soil, as she trotted off mile after mile, without a break. A cool wind blew up from the bay, bringing us balsam from the fields, and the ride would have been glorious, if we could have enjoyed it. A carriage traveling the same way enveloped us in dust. I submitted to this, as we were approaching the town of Vallejo, opposite Mare Island, by avoiding which we could save a mile or more, and I had a presentiment that the car-

riage was bound for Benecia. True enough, it struck into an open trail; I followed, and in fifteen minutes found myself on the main road to Benecia. For this service I thanked the travelers, by pushing ahead and giving them clouds of dust to swallow. The straits of Carquinez lay on our right, sparkling in the sun. The road crossed the feet of the bare, yellow hills, upon which the sun beat with culinary force; flecks of foam gathered on the mare's hide, but she still stepped out merrily, and at a quarter before one we were in Benecia.

The ferry-boat, I found, did not leave before half-past one, and consumed half an hour in crossing the Strait to Martinez. This left me but three hours and a half for the journey thither to Oakland. Clearly it would be impossible to make the trip over the mountains in a vehicle—but it might be done on horseback. I therefore decided to leave my wife in Benecia (whence she could reach San Francisco by the evening boat from Sacramento) and try my further luck alone. Having telegraphed to San Francisco that if I should not arrive in the last boat from Oakland, it was to be specially sent back for me, regardless of expense, there was nothing further to be done. Dinner was upon the table at the hotel, but although I had driven forty-one miles since breakfast, I found it impossible to eat.

While waiting at the pier for the ferry-boat, a man came up hastily, saying:

"Have you heard the news? Broderick is killed!" "What?" "When?" "How?" rang on all sides. "This morning—there is a telegraphic dispatch—Judge Terry shot him. Broderick is dead, and Terry has run away!" "Well," said one of the bystanders, "it's no more than was expected." This was true, in fact. I had already, a dozen times, at least, heard the prediction: "Broderick will be killed after the election is over." I do not suppose that there was really anything like a conspiracy to that end, as his friends afterwards charged; but from the virulence which marked the campaign, a series of duels was anticipated, in one of which he would probably fall.

No man in California had warmer friends or bitterer enemies.

The boat was delayed by taking on board a herd of cattle, and it was a quarter past two before I landed at Martinez. I hastened up the long pier, and up the hot village street, until I discovered a livery stable. The keeper was lounging indolently in the shade, and the horses seemed to be dozing in their stalls. "Can I magnetize this repose, and extract speed from it?" was the question I put to myself; whereupon the following dialogue ensued:—

"I must reach Oakland in time for the last boat for San Francisco. Give me two fast saddle-horses and a guide."

"It can't done!" (with a lazy smile.)

"It *must* be done! What is the shortest time you have done it in?"

"Four hours."

"How much do you get—two horses and a man?"

"Fifteen dollars."

"You shall have twenty-five—saddle the horses immediately."

"There's no use in taking saddle-horses—a two-horse buggy will get along faster."

"Get it then! Instantly! Don't lose a second!"

He was magnetized at last. The pass which I made over the region of his pocket, subjected him to my will. Hostlers, horses, and vehicles, were magnetized, also. There was running hither and thither—examination of bolts, buckling of straps, comparison of horses—chaotic tumult burst out of slumber. At half-past two I jumped into the buggy. We had exactly three hours in which to make a journey of twenty-five miles, by a rough road, crossing a mountain range two thousand feet high. The horses were small, not handsome, but with an air of toughness and courage: the driver had the face of a man who possesses a conscience. These were encouraging signs. My spiritual mercury immediately rose to fifteen degrees above zero.

It was hard, though, to sit still while we drove moderately

up the hot glen behind Martinez, waiting for the horses to get the requisite wind and flexibility of muscle. I quieted my restless nerves with a cigar, sufficiently to enjoy the Arcadian beauty of the scenery. Clumps of evergreen oak, bay, and sycamore, marked the winding course of the stream; white cottages, embowered in fig-trees, nestled at the foot of the hills, every opening fold of which disclosed a fresh picture; and to the eastward towered, in airy purple, the duplicate peak of Monte Diablo. Out of this glen we passed over low hills into another, and still another, enjoying exquisite views of the valleys of Pacheco and San Ramon, with Suisun Bay in the distance. The landscapes, more contracted than those of Napa and San José, had a pastoral, idyllic character, and I was surprised to find how much loveliness is concealed in the heart of mountains which, as seen from the Bay, appear so bare and bleak. Scarcely any portion of the land was unclaimed. Farm succeeded to farm, and little villages were already growing up in the broader valleys.

The afternoon sun burned our faces, though a light breeze tempered the heat enough to allow our horses to do their best. I urged upon the driver the necessity of making all he could at the start, and evaded his inquiries with regard to the time. This plan worked so well that we reached a village called Lafayette, thirteen miles from Martinez, in one hour and ten minutes. Here we watered the horses, and I lighted a fresh cigar. The mercury had risen to 32 degrees. Beyond this extended a wild, winding valley some three or four miles in length, to the foot of the high range. The hills shut us in closely: settlements became scanty, and at last we entered a narrow gorge, through which the road had been cut with much labor. A clear brook murmured at the bottom; bay-leaves scented the air, and climbing vines fell over us in showers, from the branches of the trees. Through the dark walls in front rose the blue steep of the mountain which we were obliged to scale. The roughness of the road and the chance of being stopped by meeting another team could not wholly spoil my delight in the wild beauty of this pass.

Now we grappled with the bare mountain-side, up which the road zigzagged out of sight, far above. Of course, it was impossible for the horses to proceed faster than a walk, and the lingering remnants of my anxiety were lost sight of in the necessity of preserving the equilibrium of our vehicle on those sidelong grades. We leaned, first to the right and then to the left, changing at every turn, to keep our wheels upon the slippery plane, until the shoulder of the range was surmounted, and we saw the comb about half a mile distant. From the summit we looked down, as from the eaves of a house, into the throat of a precipitous cañon which yawned below us. Between its overlapping sides glimmered, far away, a little triangle of the Bay of San Francisco. Now, let us see how much time is left to reach the shores of that blue vision? Fifty-five minutes! The mercury immediately sank to 10 degrees.

What a plunge it was until we reached the bottom of the summit-wall, where the first springs gushed forth!—and how the horses held back, with our weight pressing upon them, was more than I could understand. The narrow cañon then received us, and the horses, as if maddened with the previous restraint, dashed recklessly down the shelving road, which, as it crossed from one side to the other, back and forth, obliged us to fling our weight always on the uppermost wheels. From the rapidity of their descent, a little jolt would have been sufficient to have hurled us over into the bed of the stream. The excitement of the race made us perfectly regardless of the danger: there was even a keen sense of enjoyment, to me, in the mad, reckless manner in which we turned the sharp corners of the ravine, or spun along brinks where the pebbles, displaced by our wheels, rattled on stones twenty feet below. Neither of us said a word, but held fast for life, flinging our bodies half out of the vehicle as the road shifted sides. There was *one* fear hanging over us, but we no more mentioned it than the Alpine traveler would shout under the poised avalanche which the sound of his voice might start from its bed.

Corner after corner was passed; the horizon of the Bay, seen through the gap in front, sank lower, and the intervening plain glimpsed nearer. Then a house appeared—lo! the end of the cañon, and in fifteen minutes from the top we had made the descent of more than two miles! We both, at the same instant, drew a long, deep breath of relief, and the driver spoke out the thought which was in my own mind. "That's what I was afraid of," said he, without further explanation. "So was I," was my answer. "I didn't say a word about it, for fear talking of it would make it happen—but think, if we had met another team on the way down!" "But we *didn't*," I shouted; "and now we'll catch the boat! And my thermometer stands at 90 degrees—and the world is beautiful—and life is glorious—and all men are my brethren!" He smiled a quiet, satisfied smile, merely remarking: "I thought I'd do it."

The remaining trot of five miles over the plain was child's play, compared with what we had done. When our smoking and breathless horses were pulled up on the steamboat pier at Oakland, there were just eight minutes to spare! We had made the trip from Martinez in *two hours and fifty-two minutes*—the shortest time in which it had ever been accomplished. The bystanders, to whom my driver triumphantly proclaimed his feat, would not believe it. I paid the stipulated twenty-five dollars with the greatest cheerfulness—every penny of it had been well earned—jumped aboard the ferryboat, and threw myself on one of the cabin sofas with an exquisite feeling of relief. The anxiety I had endured through the day wholly counteracted the fatigue of the journey, and the excitement continued without the usual reaction. When we reached San Francisco, at seven o'clock, I found my friends waiting for me on the pier. They had arranged to send the boat back in case I should not arrive, which would have cost one hundred dollars.

Fortifying myself with repeated doses of strong coffee (for there was no time to get dinner), I made my appearance on

the rostrum at the appointed hour. My face was baked and blistered by the sun, and my lungs somewhat exhausted by the day's labors, but I went through the discourse of an hour and a half with very little more than the usual fatigue. At the close, when I felt inclined to congratulate myself a little, I was rather taken aback by my friends, who seeing my fiery face, and knowing nothing of the day's struggle, exclaimed, with wicked insinuation: "You have been dining out this evening!" At ten o'clock, my wife arrived in the Sacramento boat, and our supper at the Oriental was a happy *finis* to the eventful day.

5

THE SACRAMENTO VALLEY

Before completing my engagement at San Francisco, I had already made arrangements for a lecturing tour through the interior of the State. Literary associations are few in California: the prosperity of the mining towns is, in general, too precarious—their population too shifting—to encourage the growth of permanent institutions of this character; and the lecturer, consequently, misses the shelter and assistance to which he has been accustomed at home. He must accept the drudgery along with the profit. I confess that, after my previous experience, the undertaking was not tempting; but while it was incumbent upon me to visit the mining regions before leaving California, it was also prudent to make the visit (such is human nature!) pecuniarily advantageous. For Sacramento and the mountain-towns, I secured the services of Mr. E——, news-agent, as *avant-coureur*, hirer of theatres, poster of placards, and distributor of complimentary tickets.

This arrangement took the drudgery of the business off my hands, it is true; but, at the same time, it brought me be-

fore the public in a new and less agreeable character. No longer the invited guest of societies—no longer introduced to audiences by the presidents thereof—I fell to the level of itinerant phrenologists and exhibitors of nirtous oxide gas: nay—let me confess it—I could no longer look down upon the Ethiopian minstrel, or refuse to fraternize with the strolling wizard. It did not surprise me, therefore, that the principal of a classical academy, in a town which shall be nameless, not only refused to hear me, but denied permission to his scholars. “He is an author!” exclaimed this immaculate pedagogue; “yet he degrades his calling by thus appearing before the public. I have too much respect for authors to countenance such degradation!”

My lecture in Sacramento was to take place on Saturday, and my friend, Judge Hastings, of Benicia, arranged for the previous evening at the latter place. Preparing ourselves, therefore, for a month’s journey, we left San Francisco in the afternoon boat.

About twenty-five miles from the Golden Gate, the Bay of Pablo terminates, and we enter the Straits of Carquinez, which connect it with Suisun Bay, the reservoir of the Sacramento and San Joaquin valleys, lying beyond the Coast Range. These straits are from six to seven miles in length, with a breadth varying from half a mile to four miles. With their bold shores, and their varying succession of bays and headlands on either side, they have been compared to the Bosphorus—which, indeed, they surpass in natural beauty. When the hills, folding together in softly-embracing swells, which give the eye a delight like that of perfect music to the ear, and now draped in gilded velvet as the sunset strikes along their sides, shall be terraced with gardens of never-fading bloom—when, besides the live-oak, the dark pillars of the cypress, the umbelliferous crowns of the Italian pine and the plummy tufts of the hardy Chinese palm shall flourish in their sheltering arms, and when mansion on mansion shall line the water’s edge, with balconies overhanging the tide,

and boats tossing at the marble steps—then the magnificent water-street which leads from Constantinople to the Euxine will find itself not only rivalled, but surpassed.

As the sun went down, in a blaze of more than Mediterranean beauty, we reached Benicia. In 1848, many persons actually supposed that this place would become the commercial metropolis of the Pacific, and speculation raged among the lots staked out all over its barren hills. Vessels of the largest tonnage could lie close to the shore, said they—forgetting that it was possible to build piers at San Francisco. There was a fine back-country—as if all California were not the back-country of its metropolis! In fact, there was no end to the arguments (especially if you owned a lot) advanced to prove that San Francisco must go down, and Benicia must go up! But Commerce is a wilful and a stubborn goddess. She pitches on a place by a sort of instinct, and all the coaxing and forcing in the world won't budge her a jot. Benicia was made the headquarters of the Army—but it didn't help the matter. Lots were given away, shanties built, all kinds of inducements offered—still, trade wouldn't come. It was made the State capital—but, alas! it is not even the county seat at present. It is still the same bare looking, straggling place as when I first saw it, but with more and better houses, the big brick barracks of the soldiers, and the workshops of the Pacific Steamship Company. The population is about 3,000.

I have no doubt the failure of his plan broke old Semple's heart. Robert Semple, the lank Indiana giant—one of the first emigrants to California, and the President of the Constitutional Convention at Monterey—owned a great part of the land, and it would bring, he believed, millions of money into his coffers. He never spoke of San Francisco, but with the bitterest disgust. "Augh!" he exclaimed to me, as we once camped together in the Pajaro Valley; "don't mention the name: it makes me sick!" If this feeling was general among the speculators, there must have been a great many invalids in California about that time.

The superb, solitary mass of Monte Diablo, robed in the violet mist of twilight, rose before us as we landed at Benicia. Monte Diablo is a more graceful peak than Soracte: he reproduces the forms as well as the tints of the storied mountains of Greece. Like Helicon or Hymettus, he overlooks a ruin. At his base, on the shore of Suisun Bay, another metropolis was founded by Col. Stevenson, who commanded the New York Regiment sent to California in 1846. He called his embryo city (Heaven help us!) "New-York-of-the-Pacific!" Nature tolerates many strange names in our United States, but this was more than she could stand. In 1849, I saw three houses there; and *then*, one could not venture to laugh at beginnings. What was my joy, when I now beheld only *two* houses—one of them uninhabited—and was informed that the shore was covered with the skeletons of mosquitos which had died of starvation!

To keep my engagement at Sacramento the next evening, it was necessary that we should make the journey thither by land, a distance of sixty miles. After riding in a jolting stage around the great tulé marsh, to Suisun City, twenty miles off, I had the good luck to meet a gentleman who placed a two-horse team at our disposal. We were thus free to finish the journey on our old independent footing.

The day was cloudless, and intensely hot, and even the dry, yellow grass appeared to have been scorched off the cracked and blistered earth. Low undulations of soil rolled away before us, until the plain vanished in fiery haze, and the wind which blew over it was as the blast from out a furnace. At intervals of four or five miles, we found a settler's cabin, with its accompanying *corral* and garden, and a windmill, lazily turning in the heated gusts. Miles away on our right, a blue line of timber marked the course of the Sacramento River, apparently separated from us by a lake, dotted with island-like clumps of trees. Every distant depression of the plain was filled with the same illusive water. Newly-arrived emigrants, unacquainted with the mirage, often ride

far out of their trail, in the endeavor to reach these airy pools. An accustomed eye has no difficulty in detecting them, as the color is always that of the sky, whereas real water is a darker blue.

After a steady travel of nearly five hours, the road swerved to the right, and ascended an artificial dyke, or embankment, which has been made with much labor, in order to raise it above the reach of the winter floods. At intervals of fifty or a hundred yards, there are bridges, to allow passage for the water: and I think we must have crossed twenty-five of them in the distance of a mile. On either side were dried-up swamps of giant tulé. This causeway conducted us to the river-bank, which is considerably higher than the plain in its rear. Thence, for six miles, we followed the course of the stream—the road, deep in dust, winding among golden and purple thickets, which exhaled the most delicious fragrance, and under the arching arms of the oak and sycamore. It was a storehouse of artistic foregrounds. I know not which charmed us most—the balmy, shadowed sweetness of the air, the dazzling gaps of sunshine, the picturesque confusion of forms, or the splendid contrasts of color.

Four miles below Sacramento, we crossed the river on a ferry-scow, and hastened onward through Sutterville; for the sun was nigh his setting. A cloud of white dust hid the city, and lay thick and low all over the plain. Increasing in volume, huge, billowy eddies of it rolled toward us, and we were presently blinded by the clouds that arose from our own wheels. Of the last two miles of the drive I can say nothing—for I saw nothing. After there was a rattling of wheels near me, as the strings of vehicles returning from the fair-grounds passed by; but the horses instinctively avoided a collision. I shut my eyes, and held my breath as much as possible, until there came a puff of fresher air, and I found myself in one of the watered streets of the city. Blinded, choked, and sunburned, we alighted at the St. George Hotel, and were so lucky as to find a room. The city, like San Francisco, was al-

together a different place from the picture in my memory. Having been not only laid in ashes, but completely washed away by the inundation of 1853, not a house remains from the pioneer times. It was, in reality, only six years old—a fact which accounted for the light character of much of the architecture, and the unusual number of one-story buildings. The streets are broad, inflexibly right-angled, and prosaically named after the numerals, and the letters of the alphabet. The business portion of the city extends five or six blocks back from the river, and a greater distance along J, K, and L streets. Beyond this region, there are many beautiful private residences and gardens. The place is greatly admired by its inhabitants, but the uniformity of surface and plan made it appear tame and monotonous, after San Francisco.

The first thing I looked for, and totally missed, was the profusion of grand, ancient oaks and sycamores, which once adorned the streets. Every one had fallen—some destroyed in the conflagration, but the most part cut down, because they interfered with buildings, or dropped their aged limbs in a storm. Their place was miserably filled with rows of young cottonwoods, of astonishing growth, which cast alternate showers of down and sticky gum upon the garments of those who walk in their shade. I grieved over the loss of the noble old trees. Perhaps it was inevitable that they should fall, but it was none the less melancholy.

Sacramento is a cheerful, busy town of about 15,000 inhabitants, with a State-house which would be imposing if it were all one color, substantial churches and school-houses, a few flourishing manufactureries, and drinking saloons innumerable. It boasts the best daily paper in the State (*The Union*), the biggest hotel, and (being the capital) the worst class of politicians. It is a city whose future is *sure*, but whose character must necessarily be provincial. Its difference from San Francisco, in this respect, is already striking.

Hearing the sound of solemn singing in the street, on Sunday morning, I went upon the balcony. There was a crowd

below, collected around a young man with a pale face and short-cut blonde hair, who was singing a Methodist hymn, in a clear, penetrating voice. After he had finished, he commenced an exhortation which lasted about twenty minutes, the crowd listening with respectful attention. At its close, a seedy-looking individual went around with a hat, with such good result, that some twenty or thirty dollars in silver were poured out on a stone at the preacher's feet. By this time, most of the ladies in the hotel were collected on the balcony. Casting his eyes upward, the preacher acknowledged their presence in a series of remarks rather courtly than clerical. He concluded by saying: "That distinguished traveler, *Bay-ard Taylor*, has also stated that, wherever he went, he was kindly treated by the ladies! When he visited the Esquimaux, in the Arctic Regions, the ladies received him with great hospitality; and even among the Hottentots, his friends were still—*the ladies!*" Not content with attributing Ledyard's sentiment to myself, he made that noble traveler guilty of vulgarity. Ledyard said "*woman*," not "*lady*." After this, I can almost credit Miss Martineau's statement, that an American clergyman said, in one of his sermons: "Who were last at the cross? Ladies! Who were earliest at the sepulchre? Ladies!"

The State Agricultural Fair (then in progress) was held in a Pavilion, the erection of which, for this special occasion, was the boast of the city. It was a hall of brick, resting on a basement—two hundred, by one hundred and fifty feet in dimensions, and fifty in height. About seven weeks, only, were consumed in building it. The display of productions—agricultural, horticultural, mineral, mechanical, and artistic—astonished even the Californians themselves. Few of them had been aware of the progress which their State had made in the arts—nor, though familiar with the marvellous energies of her soil, could they guess how rich and varied were its productions, until thus brought together. Few of the annual fairs of our Atlantic States could have surpassed it in

completeness, to say nothing of the vegetable wonders which can be seen nowhere else in the world.

Entering the basement, you saw before you a collection of carriages, fire-engines, saddlery, harness, furniture, and agricultural implements—all of California manufacture: blocks of granite and freestone, blue, white, and amber Suisun marble; statuary, cured ham, pickles, sauces, preserves, canned fruits, dried fruits, honey, oil, olives, soap, butter, cheese, vinegar: twenty or thirty different varieties of wine: rows of bee-hives near the windows, which were opened, that the unembarrassed insects might go on with their work: rope, tanned hides, boots, clothing; in short, all the necessities of life, and not a few of the luxuries. Coming upon a pile of green boulders—huge geodes of malachite, you suspect—you find them to be water-melons: walking down a glen, between rounded masses of orange colored rock, you see, at last, that they are only pumpkins, weighing two hundred and sixty pounds apiece! What is this silvery globe, the size of your head? Bless me, an onion! Are those turnips, or paving-stones? White columns of celery, rising from the floor, curl their crisp leaves over your head; those green war-clubs are cucumbers; and these legs, cut off at the groin and clad in orange tights, are simply carrots!

Again, I say, it is useless to attempt a description of California vegetables. The above comparisons suggest no exaggeration to those who have seen the objects—yet my readers this side of the Rocky Mountains will not believe it. Growth so far beyond the range of our ordinary experience seems as great a miracle as any which have been performed by the toe-nails of saints. I have been informed even, that some vegetables change their nature, after being transplanted here for a few years. The lima-bean becomes perennial, with a woody stem; the cabbage, even (though I should prefer seeing this), is asserted, in one instance, to have changed into a sort of shrub, bearing a head on the end of every branch! I believe no analysis of the various soils of California has yet

been made. It would be curious to ascertain whether this vegetable vigor is mostly due to a fortunate climate, or to a greater proportion of nutriment in the earth than is elsewhere found.

The great hall was devoted principally to fruits, and presented a rare banquet of color and perfume. Green, lemon, yellow, gold, orange, scarlet, pink, crimson, purple, violet, blue, and their mottled combinations, fairly made the mouth water from the delight of the eye. There were thousands of specimens, from gardens in the Sierra Nevada and gardens on the sea-coast; in Los Angeles, under the palm, and in Oregon under the pine. A fountain, at one end of the hall, played upon two enormous cubes of crystal ice—one from Nevada Lake and one from Sitka. The latter was so airily clear, that it would have been invisible but for the gleam of light on the edges. As an illustration of progress in California, the contents of the pavilion were doubly remarkable. Who so mad, ten years ago, as to have predicted this result? Who, now, can appreciate, without seeing it?

I must not leave Sacramento without speaking of the garden and nursery of Mr. A. P. Smith, a visit to which was the crown and culminating point of a glorious ride over the plain around the city. After dragging along through deep roads, where wagon-loads of straw had been scattered, to keep down the dust, we approached the American Fork, some three miles above Sacramento. There were various suburban beer-gardens, shaded with cottonwoods, and with long arbors of grape-vines to attract the Teutonic imbibers—all of them pleasant places, but tame and vulgar in comparison to what we were to see.

An avenue, lined with locusts and *arbor vitæ*, conducted us, finally, to some neat wooden cottages, the verandas of which were overrun with the scarlet-fruited passion-flower. A clean gravel road inclosed a circle of turf, in the centre whereof grew willow, locust, and pomegranate trees, beyond which extended a wilderness of splendid bloom. Behind the

house rose the fringe of massive timber which lines the American Fork. A series of stairs and balcony-terraces connected one cottage with another, and formed an easy access to the very roof-tree. A wild grape-vine, which had so covered an evergreen oak that it resembled a colossal fountain, pouring forth volumes of falling Bacchic leaves, stretched forth arms from the topmost boughs, took hold of the balconies, and ran riot up and down the roof, waving its arms above the very chimneys. Behind this Titanic bower were thickets of bay and willow, with a glimpse of the orange-colored river, framed on the opposite side, by as grand and savage a setting. From the top of the roof, the eye overlooked the whole glorious garden, the spires of the city, the yellow plain, vanishing in purple haze, and the range of violet mountains in the east.

I was curious to see what had been done toward introducing the trees and plants of other parts of the world into a climate so favorable to all, from Egypt to Norway. I found even more than I had anticipated. There, side by side, in the open air, grew the natives of Mexico, Australia, the Cape of Good Hope, China, the Himalayas, Syria, Italy, and Spain. The plants were mostly very young, as sufficient time had not elapsed since the seeds were procured, to enable any of them to reach a full development; but the character of their growth was all that could be desired. To my great delight, I found not only the Indian *deodar* and the funeral cypress of China, but the cedar of Lebanon, and the columnar cypress of Italy, and the Orient. The exquisite Cape *ericas* and *azaleas* flourished as in their native air; the thready tamarack of Africa, the Indian-rubber tree, the Australian *eucalyptus*, and the Japanese *camelia* were as lush and luxuriant as if rejoicing in their new home. In the conservatories, no artificial heat is required, except for the orchids and other tender tropical plants. What a vegetable splendor will California present in fifty years from now! I should almost be content to live so long, that my eyes might behold it.

Not less remarkable was the superior luxuriance which the growths of the Atlantic States exhibit, when transferred to the Pacific Side. The locust, especially, doubles the size of its leaf, and its pinnated tufts almost rival those of the sago palm. The *pawlonia* spreads a tremendous shield; and even the evergreens, especially the *thuya*, manifest a new vitality. The rose is frequently so large as to suggest the idea of a peony, yet loses nothing of its fragrance and beauty. I never beheld a more exquisite bouquet of half-blown roses, than Mr. Smith's gardener cut for my companion. Great beds of violets, heliotrope, and mignonette, fairly ran wild, like weeds, and the lemon verbenas became a bush, higher than our heads. The breezes fainted with excess of perfume as they came over this garden—the languid, voluptuous atmosphere of which can only be compared to that of the nutmeg orchards of Ceylon.

Mr. Smith related to me a curious fact with regard to the habits of fruit-trees in California. He uses no irrigation—in fact, finds no necessity for it. Seeing that the young trees thrived without interruption, during the long summer drouth, he was led to examine them closely, and discovered that every plant makes it the first business to send down a straight, slender tap-root, until it reaches the stratum of moisture. Having once accomplished this, it feels secure and devotes its energies to the visible portion of its body. I saw a pear tree, three feet high, which in one summer had thrust a tap-root *six feet* straight down into the earth, and no thicker than a knitting-needle! All plants appear to change in this respect.

And then comes the question—if plants change, wherefore not men? And if so, how? Or is the change only in the hidden roots of our character, not in the boughs and blossoms which we show to the world?

Traveling in California is very like what it was in the Atlantic States thirty years ago. The stage-coach, obsolete among us, is there a prominent institution. The various lines are very well managed, on the whole—the proportion of

speed and safety being fully up to the old average. There are, however, three disadvantages—jolts, dust, and Chinamen. The amount of freighting done on all the principal roads speedily wears the best highways into holes and ruts; the hoofs of four horses, playing in a bed of powdered earth, raise volcanic puffs of brown dust; and unless you are on a hard plain, where there is a pick of tracks, and the wind abeam, you have your mouth jerked open as fast as you can shut it, and choked every time it is opened. Then the proximity of a greasy, filthy Chinaman, with his yellow, libidinous face and sickening smell of stale opium, is in itself sufficient to poison all the pleasure of the journey. I have often felt an involuntary repulsion when seated near a negro in some public conveyance, at home; but I confess I would rather be wedged in between two of the blackest Africans than be touched by one Chinaman. In both cases, the instinct is natural and unconquerable; but on the score of humanity, the former race stands immeasurably above the latter.

I must plead guilty to a prejudice against the Chinese. If it were possible for human nature to be so thoroughly perverted that even the simplest, most general ideas of right and wrong should be transmitted from generation to generation in distorted forms, this phenomenon would be found among them. Of all people with whom I have become acquainted, they stand on the lowest moral platform—rather, indeed, on none at all: and when one once knows with what abominations their lives are filled, he sees, thenceforward, pollution in their presence. Those who have been in China will understand me—for many of the reasons of my dislike cannot be told. The Chinaman in California, it is true, is hardly treated; but it were better if he could have been wholly excluded. He has the one virtue of industry, and his cheap habits of life enable him to get a profit out of bars deserted by the white miners, and soil scorned by the white farmers. In this way, he adds something to the production of the State: he also washes, cooks, and serves in various menial

capacities—but I doubt whether these services atone for the moral contamination of his presence. I have never found it more difficult to exercise Christian charity, than toward these *fungi* of a rotten civilization.

On leaving for Marysville, I avoided the three discomforts of stage travel, by securing a seat behind the driver. Rolling out through the watered streets of Sacramento, between shivering rows of dusty cottonwoods, which continually drop their gum and tow on the promenaders, we speedily reached the American Fork. The color of these rivers, since the discovery of gold, has changed from pure crystalline beryl to an opaque reddish-yellow, similar to that of pickled salmon. They are not only hopelessly polluted, but the earth brought continually down from above fills up the channel, changes its course, increases inundations, and year after year, so clogs the bed of the Sacramento that steamboat navigation—which is now feasible for one hundred and eighty miles above the city—threatens to be cut off altogether.

A balmy wind blew from the north, carrying the dust away from us, and the journey, in my lofty seat, with a free outlook over the vast landscape, was very enjoyable. At the Six-Mile House, our horses were watered, and the passengers brandied: at the Twelve-Mile House, the horses were changed, and the passengers whiskied. Our speed perceptibly increased after each halt, and ere long, the far line of oaks marking the course of the Feather River became visible. First, a pale-blue braid, tacked along the hem of the landscape, it gradually became an irregular flounce, cut into embayed scallops; and, finally, the very pattern on the golden ground of Nature's dress. The eye rested with double delight on those superb trees, after the monotony of the sun-scorched plain. The river flows in a more contracted bed than the American Fork, whence it is navigable, although the body of water is not greater.

A quiet, sleepy little place is the town of Nicolaus, on Feather river, twenty-five miles from Sacramento. Huge oaks,

stretching their arms over the single broad street, give it an air of rural repose. There is also a very comfortable inn, where we halted a few minutes, and the passengers beered or brandied. Owing to this fact, no doubt, the new horses were exceedingly spirited, and the four miles to Bear Creek were accomplished in twenty minutes. Over the hard, level road, through alternate belts of sunshine and shade, galloped the four fiery animals until we reached a spot which was to have been called "Oro," and would have been, if anybody could have been induced to settle there. A single house, on a knoll above the dry bed of Bear Creek, is all that is to be seen. This was formerly one of the many capitals of the State. A certain State Senator, who bought a ranche here, introduced a bill making it the seat of government. "Why," remarked another member, "there is no water in Bear Creek: how will steamboats get up to the place?" "Do you mean to insult me?" exclaimed the mover of the bill, fiercely brandishing his cane; "I assure you the House that *The Senator* can reach the spot every day in the year, and I will chastise you if you deny my word!" "The Senator" was a large steamboat, which plied between San Francisco and Sacramento. Thereupon the other apologized, withdrew his remark, and the bill passed. The ranche was immediately staked into lots, and the possessor realized some forty or fifty thousand dollars by the sale thereof.

Summer came, Bear Creek dried up, and the humbug was seen by everybody. "What did you mean by saying that *The Senator* could get here every day in the year?" exclaimed the indignant purchasers. "Why," coolly answered the ex-Senator, "it is true: the Senator who contradicted me *can* get here at any time—what is to hinder him? I never said a *steamboat* could do it!" Having thus reconciled the swindle to his conscience, the gentleman prudently retired from California. This was told me by two fellow-passengers, while passing the spot.

As it drew toward noon, the breeze fell, and the sun beat

fiercely upon our heads. The temperature was at least 90 degrees in the shade—which, for the 19th of September, was a fair degree of heat; though, as the driver said: "This here ain't a circumstance to the hot days in June." "How hot was it then?" I asked. "Why," said he, "120 degrees in the shade." "Impossible!" "Well, it *was*, and more'n that. Lord! how the horses used to drop dead along this road! The leaves just curled up in the heat, and the trees looked as they was ready to take fire. The wind blowed from the south, and you'd ha' thought a piece of hot sheet iron was held before your face. Why, the crows couldn't fly, but jist sot on the branches; and every now and then one tumble off, dead as a hammer." "That's so!" said one of the passengers; "it was the awfulest heat I ever see. The ground burnt through your boots, and the sky was sort o' hazy, like the world was nigh bustin' into a blaze." These accounts were afterwards corroborated by others. The temperature must have equalled that of the Sahara—yet the effect upon human life seems not to have been so fatal as some of our "heated terms" on the Atlantic Coast.

The Sacramento Buttes—a curious isolated group of hills, which form a landmark for near a hundred miles up and down the valley—now rose blue and beautiful before us, their craggy sides tinted with rose-color in the sunshine. From the topmost peak, which is about twelve hundred feet above the level of the valley, there is a wonderful panorama, in clear weather. The view extends from Monte Diablo in the south to the solitary Alpine cone of Shasta in the north, a distance of more than two hundred miles. Lovely little dells lie between the bases of the group; and the citizens of Marysville, only eight miles distant, are beginning to perceive the prudence of securing residences in a spot which combines so many natural advantages. Here, again, there is the basis for another Arcadian day-dream.

As we approached the Yuba River, the country became rolling, the road a fathomless bed of dust—yet this was disre-

garded, in the contemplation of the superb trees, studded with growths of mistletoe, and hung with a gorgeous drapery of wild grape-vines. Where the land had been cleared, there were fields of Indian corn which surpassed anything I had ever seen. The average height of the stalks was not less than fifteen feet, and the size and number of the ears was in proportion. The brick blocks of Marysville now appeared in front, on the west bank of the Yuba, which we crossed by a lofty and substantial bridge.

Marysville is the best-built town of its size in California. At the head of navigation on Feather River, it occupies the same situation with regard to the northern mines that Stockton does to the southern, while the opening of Honey Lake and Pitt River valleys insure for it a more prosperous future. Its founder, Mr. Fall, who is still the largest proprietor, is one of the few men who made a lucky hit at the start, and kept it. He was absent on a trip to Carson Valley at the time of my visit, and I regretted that I did not see his garden, which is one of the most beautiful in the State. Marysville has already a population of eight thousand. It is laid out in regular squares, the houses being mostly of brick, flat-roofed, and two stories high. The prevailing red tint is not agreeable to the eye; but this will probably disappear in the course of time. The situation of the town is very beautiful, the Yuba, in spite of its orange tint, being a lovely stream, not yet denuded of its timber, through the openings in which you see the far peaks of the Sierra Nevada.

My performances were held in the theatre, which was then vacant. Considering the fact that five or six hundred of the principal citizens were then in Sacramento, attending the State Fair, the attendance was very good, and I was gratified at seeing, in the gallery, quite a number of flannel-shirted miners. One circumstance puzzled me at first. After I had been discoursing for half an hour, several gentlemen got up and left. Presently, another party rose and retired in a body. Well, thought I, they are certainly bored: it is not the enter-

tainment they expected: they have been accustomed to negro minstrels, and anything of a serious nature is tiresome to them. But, to my surprise, they all returned in five minutes afterwards, and sat quietly until the close. On stating this to a friend, he laughed. "Why," said he, "didn't you guess it? They only went out *for a drink!*" I afterward got accustomed to this practice, as it happened almost every night. The innocence with which it was done amused me, although the interruption was annoying. I had serious thoughts of engaging waiters, in felt slippers, to attend, take orders, and bring to each thirsty auditor the drink he desired. In other respects, the Marysville audience was very agreeable—decidedly more warm and genial than in San Francisco, with an equally intelligent attention.

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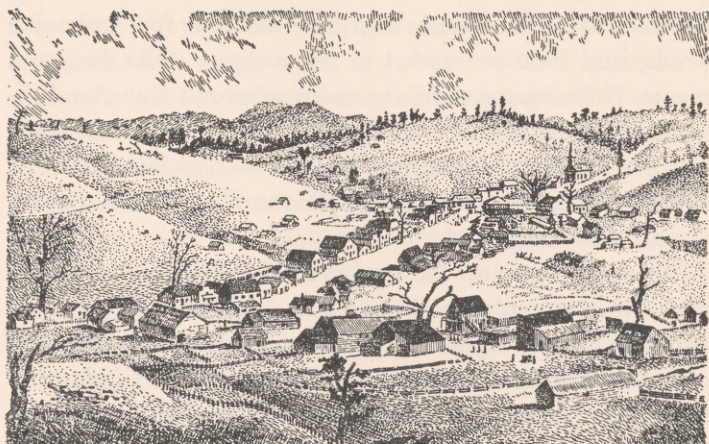
THE NORTHERN MINES

I had made an engagement with a literary society in the town of Nevada, high up in the mountains, for the next evening; and it was therefore necessary to take a stage which left Marysville at three in the morning. The driver cruelly picked us up first of all, and then went around the town, in the cold morning starlight, calling for the other passengers. Two or three miners and traders and a Chinese woman entered—the latter surrounded with a hideous, jabbering crowd of countrymen, who yelled after her adieux which sounded more like curses. Then we drove off upon the dark plain, silent and uncommunicative for the first two hours. The dawn came as we were passing through the oak openings at the base of the foot-hills, and revealed to us the bearded faces and stalwart forms opposite, and the squat yellow figure on the middle seat, with her lantern, tea-kettle, paper-box, and various other articles, tied separately in dirty handkerchiefs.

She looked around with a grin, cackled a few unknown words, and then proceeded to roll a cigar, strike fire, and smoke. Noticing my wife, she made a second cigar, and offered it to her. As this was declined, she took a small black cake in her harpy talons, and made a second attempt to be friendly. To refuse, without an open manifestation of disgust, was all that was possible.

By sunrise, we were toiling up and down a rough, sideling road, on the west bank of the Yuba. I looked with great interest for the first signs of gold-washing, and they were soon visible in the bare, yellow, devastated river-bed below us. Soon after entering the hills we reached Long Bar, a mining-camp which extends for some distance along the river. Wooden flumes, raised on tall tressels, brought water from some reservoir above to the diggings, where it fell into the sluices in which the earth is washed. The absence of any appearance of permanent settlement—the rough board shanties in which the miners live—did not give evidence of a great yield of gold. In fact, they were washing the same bars over for perhaps the fifth or sixth time. Every year some new deposit is struck, besides what is continually brought down by the winter floods; but the chances of great strikes are gradually lessened. These operations are now carried on by small companies of miners: individual labor, which was the rule in 1849, has almost entirely ceased.

The miners were just turning out of their bunks, and the doors of their shanties being open, enabled us to see how rude and simple are their habits of life. They lived, two or three in a hut, doing their own cooking and housekeeping. Some were washing their eyes, and combing their matted hair: some kindling fires in little stone ovens; others taking a morning draught at the "*Hotel de la France!*" and some few singing songs in the patois of the Canadian *voyageurs*. Rough, ruddy fellows they were, with any amount of animal health and animal appetites. Where culture is engrafted on such a physical stock, the fruit is—MEN.



SONORA FROM THE NORTH

Crossing the Yuba by a species of floating bridge, we climbed the opposite bank, and after winding among the red, dry-baked hills for a mile or two, reached Timbuctoo—a place which has recently grown into notice through the hydraulic mining carried on there. It lies in a narrow glen, down the bottom of which poured a stream of yellow batter, scarcely to be recognized as water after it has been employed in mining. The village consists of a single street, well-built, though wooden, and lively and cheerful to look upon. We only stopped to leave the mails, and then drove on, gradually ascending, to the Empire Rancho, two miles further, where breakfast awaited us. Fine oak-trees, a large barn and stabling, a peach-orchard, vineyard, and melon patch, were the first signs of permanent settlement we had seen since entering the hills. The breakfast was abundant and good, and there was a marked increase of social feeling among the passengers, afterwards.

Beyond this, the hills, which had been terribly denuded of timber, retained their original forests. The road crossed several spurs, and then entered a long, shallow cañon, up which we toiled in heat and dust. Blue mountain-ranges gleamed afar, through the gaps in the trees; the clayey water rushed

overhead through the flumes, or fell in turbid cascades down the side of the hill, and huge freight teams drawn by long strings of mules, occasionally blocked our way. It was a singular mixture of savage and civilized Nature. From the top of the cañon we descended three or four miles into Penn's Valley, a rich, circular tract of bottom land, studded with magnificent trees, and already mapped into farms, and fenced. Two miles beyond this is Rough-and-Ready, a mining camp in a very rich ravine. It had recently been destroyed by fire: half of it consisted of new, uninhabited shanties, and the other half of blackened embers.

Another hour, over a rolling, well-timbered region, two thousand feet above the sea, and crossing the brow of the hill, we saw a large town below us. Blocks of brick buildings, church spires, suburban cottages and gardens, gave it quite an imposing air—but war and tempest seemed to have passed over the surrounding landscape. The hills were stripped of wood, except here and there a single pine, which stood like a monumental obelisk amid the stump head-stones of its departed brethren: the bed of the valley was torn into great holes and furrows; and wherever the eye turned, it met with glaring piles of red earth, like redoubts thrown up in haste and then deserted. This was Grass Valley, famous in the annals of mining: and such are the ravages which the search for gold works on the fair face of Nature.

Descending into the town, we found macadamized and watered streets, and plank sidewalks, respectable hotels, a theatre, express office, and all other signs of a high civilization. Here the young woman called John (every Chinaman, male or female, is called "John" in California) left us. Mails were delivered, and we bowled along over a broad turnpike to Nevada, four miles farther. The approach to the town, along the steep bank of a ravine, is very striking. The houses rise along the opposite bank, on both sides of a lateral ravine, sending out irregular arms up the hills, to the foot of a conical peak, called the Sugar Loaf, which overlooks it. But for

the red brick, I should compare it to some Syrian city. Around it there is a barren, desolate space, full of yawning gaps, and piles of naked earth, with here and there a young garden interposed; and over all—like a raised rim to the basin in which it lies—a forest of pines. The place is a little larger than Grass Valley, having about four thousand inhabitants.

We found comfortable quarters in Mr. Lancaster's fire-proof tavern. The afternoon was devoted principally to repose, as my day's work had to be done in the evening. An audience of more than three hundred assembled in the theatre, which, as the tickets cost a dollar, was equivalent to double the number at home. With the exception of San Francisco, the attendance was the best I found in California. In character, the people resembled the communities of the Western States—genial, impulsive, quick, anticipative even. Professional talkers will understand how pleasant is an audience of this character.

Having expressed a great desire to get a sight of the central chain of the Sierra Nevada, Mr. Rolfe proposed an excursion along the main ridge, which runs parallel with the South Fork of the Yuba, up to the Truckee Pass. We started early the following afternoon, designing to reach a point some eight or ten miles distant, whence the highest peaks of the northern Sierra could be seen. Behind Nevada, an admirable road, cut along the side of the hill, leads off in a north-eastern direction for two miles, gradually mounting to the summit of the ridge. The unbroken, primitive forest then received us. Pillars two hundred feet high and six feet in diameter, straight as a lance, and tapering as gracefully as the shaft of the areca palm, rose on all sides: far above mingled the tufted boughs, admitting only chance beams of sunshine, which struck in slanting lines of gold through the fragrant, shadowy air. The road was a rough, rutty, fathomless bed of dust, but elsewhere the dry earth was hidden under a carpet of yellow ferns. Where the ridge fell off on either side, the summits of the trees below formed an impervious canopy which shut out

the distant view. We drove for several miles through the aisles of this grand natural cathedral, before which the pillared hall of Karnak and the aspiring arches of the minster of Cologne sink into nothingness. No Doric column could surpass in beauty of proportion those stupendous shafts. They are the demigods of the vegetable world.

Here and there we saw a small clearing, or a saw-mill—the blasphemous dragon which lays waste these sacred solitudes—or a tavern, patronized by the teamsters who traverse this road on their way to the upper diggings, near the source of the Yuba. Still further on, we were surprised by a fierce roaring sound, and the sight of scarlet gleams of fire, flashing out of the shades. The giant trunks stood scornfully in the midst of it, secure in their bulk, but the underwood and the dead boughs which had fallen snapped and crackled, as the flames leaped upon them. We drove through the midst of it, and, on a ferny knoll beyond, saw whence it originated. A company of Digger Indians, half naked, lay upon the ground. They had been burning a dead body, and, according to their custom, had plastered their hair and cheeks with a mixture of pitch and the fat rendered out of the dear departed, as a token of sorrow. During the performance of this ceremony, their howlings and lamentations are frightful. Those whom we saw had completed their task, and had an air of stupid satisfaction, resulting from the consciousness of having done their duty.

The dust raised by our wheels was so fine, penetrating, and suffocating, that the excursion became a torture rather than a pleasure. We, therefore, relinquished the idea of going on to Gold Hill—a picturesque mining-camp on a terrace overhanging the river—and halted at a point where the ridge turns sharply to the south, allowing a wide outlook to the north and east. The view was vast in extent, grand and savage in character, yet monotonous in form, lacking the usual abruptness and picturesqueness of mountain scenery. Directly below us yawned the valley of the South Fork, at least two

thousand feet deep. Opposite, rose a ridge similar to that on which we stood, dividing the South and Middle Forks—its summit presenting an almost even line, covered with dark forests. Over this a few higher peaks lifted themselves, in the distance; and still further, Pilot Knob and the other summits of the Sierra, beyond Downieville. Eastward the deep gorge vanished between vapory mountain-walls, over which towered the topmost heights between us and the Great Basin of Utah. The highest peaks were about 10,000 feet above the sea-level; yet, greatly to our disappointment, no snow was to be seen. The unusual heat of the summer had denuded even the loftiest summits, and they stood bare and broken, of a pale violet color, like the dolomite mountains of Southern Tyrol.

Returning along the same track, we emerged from the forest just at sunset, and halted, involuntarily, at the wonderful beauty of the scene before us. The deep, trough-like glen down which our road lay, slept in shadow: at its mouth Nevada, with her encircling hills, burned in a flush of imperial purple light; while the mountains of the Coast Range, seventy miles away, were painted in rose-color, transparent against the sunset. I know of but one pencil capable of reproducing this magic illumination. In Spain, and Sicily, and Syria, I have never seen a lovelier effect of color. For a full half-hour the glow lingered, as if reluctant to fade away and leave to us the unlovely reality of shanties, shabby houses, heaps of dirt, and riddled and perforated hills.

While in Sacramento, I had received an invitation to spend an evening in Timbuctoo, and on my way to Nevada, completed the arrangements for visiting that unknown and mysterious place. It involved a journey of twenty miles over the road I had already traveled, and a return to Nevada on the following day; but as Timbuctoo is said to be the grandest example of hydraulic mining in California, I did not grudge the extra travel. Early on Monday morning we took saddle-horses, my companion being ambitious to gain experience in an art new to her. We had a pair of spirited animals—almost

too much so, in fact, for such a sultry, stifling day—and got over the four miles to Grass Valley in short order. Thence to Rough-and-Ready and Penn's Valley, all went well; but as the sun mounted higher, and the dust rose, and the unaccustomed arm wearied of the check-rein, the inspiration of the rider flagged, and never was haven more welcome than the Empire Ranch, two miles from Timbuctoo.

In the afternoon, Mr. Carpenter, to whom I was indebted for the opportunity of visiting the place, accompanied me to view the mining operations. A ridge about five hundred feet in height divides the glen in which the town lies from the Yuba River, and the whole of this ridge from the summit down to the bed-rock, contains gold. At first the washings were confined to the bottom of the valley, and to Rose's Bar, on the Yuba. After the richest deposits were exhausted, short drifts were carried into the hills at their base, and it was finally ascertained that if any plan could be devised to curtail the expense of labor, the entire hill might be profitably washed down. In this manner originated what is called hydraulic mining—a form of working, which, I believe, is not known in any other part of the world.

The undertakings for the purpose of procuring a steady supply of water through the dry seasons, commenced as early as 1850. It was found that the deposits of gold were not only on the river-bars, but that scarcely a valley, or glen, or dip among the hills, throughout the whole extent of the gold region, was barren of the precious metal. That these might be worked, the rivers were tapped high up in the mountains, and ditches carried along the intervening ridges, raised on gigantic flumes wherever a depression occurred, from distances varying from fifteen to forty miles. Here was immediately a new field for enterprise. Water companies were formed for the construction of these vast works, and the ditches led so as to supply the greatest number of mining localities. The water is furnished at so much per inch—generally at very exorbitant rates—and is therefore a surer source

of profit than mining itself. Nothing seemed to me more remarkable, in travelling through the gold region, than the grand scale on which these operations are conducted.

The ditch which supplies Timbuctoo is thirty-five miles long, and was constructed at a cost of \$600,000. Yet, on this capital it yields an annual dividend of at least forty per cent. Some ditches are still more profitable than this, and it may be said that none of them has failed to pay handsomely, except through mismanagement. One of the companies at Timbuctoo uses water to the value of \$100 every day. Near the end of the ditch there is a reservoir, into which the stream is turned at night, in order to create a reserve for any emergency.

Following a line of fluming along the top of the ridge, we presently came to a great gulf, or gap, eaten out of the southern side of the hill. A wall of bare earth, more than a hundred feet high, yawned below our feet, and two streams of water, pouring over the edge, thundered upon the loose soil below, which was still further broken up by jets from hose which the workmen held. After the water had become thoroughly commingled with earth, it was again gathered into a stream and conducted into a long sluice, in the bottom of which grooves of quicksilver caught the scattered grains of gold. Nothing could be more simple than the process. The water of itself ate channels into the lofty wall of earth, and then pulverized and dissolved the dirt it had brought down. Commencing at the base of the hill, the soil has thus been gradually eaten away to the depth of two hundred yards, down to the bed rock, leaving a face exposed, in some places 150 feet in perpendicular height. The whole of the immense mass of earth which has been displaced has passed through the sluice, deposited its gold, and been carried down by the waste water to clog the current of the Yuba, the Feather, and the Sacramento.

On the northern side, a similar process was in operation, and the two excavations had approached each other so nearly,

that a few months only were requisite to break the back of the hill. Crossing the narrow bridge between, I approached the end of the ridge, and found myself on the edge of a third, and still grander work! Thousands on thousands of tons had been removed, leaving an immense semicircular cavity, with a face nearly 150 feet in height. From the summit, five streams fell in perpendicular lines of spray, trampling and boiling in cauldrons of muddy foam as they mingled with the loose dirt at the bottom. While I gazed, a mass of earth, weighing, at least, five tons, detached itself from the top, between the channels cut by two of those streams, and fell with a thundering crash, which made the hill tremble to its base. Another and another slide succeeded, while the pigmies below, as if rejoicing in the ruin, sprang upon them with six-inch jets from the hose serpents which coiled around the bank, and reduced the fragments to dust. Beyond this scene of chaos, the water gathered again, and through the straight sluice—like a giant bleeding to death from a single vein—the mountain washed itself away.

It seemed a work of the Titans. When I saw what the original extent of the hill had been—how certainly the whole ridge, which rose so defiant, as if secure of enduring until the end of the world, was doomed to disappear—how the very aspect of Nature would be in time transformed by such simple agents as this trough of water, and those three flannel-shirted creatures with their hose—I acknowledged that there might be a grandeur in gold-mining beyond that of the building of the Pyramids.

Some fascination must be connected with this labor, or men would not trifle so recklessly with the forces they attack. Scarcely a week passed without some report of workmen being buried under the falling masses of earth. Though continually warned—though familiar with the danger from long experience—they become so absorbed in the work of undermining the slippery bluffs, that they gradually approach nearer and nearer; the roar of the water drowns the threat-

ening hiss of the relaxing soil—down comes the avalanche, and, if the man's foot is not as quick as his eye, he is instantly crushed out of existence. In descending to the village, I followed two miners, taking a path which led downward, on the top of a narrow wall, left standing between the two excavations on the southern side. In some places, the top was not more than six feet wide, and the appearance of the loose, gravelly soil, dropping straight down a hundred feet on either hand, threatening to give way beneath my weight, was not calculated to inspire confidence. Seven days afterward, the entire mass fell (fortunately in the night), with a crash that jarred the earth for a mile around.

In Mr. Carpenter's office, I found a choice collection of standard works—Ruskin, Coleridge, Emerson, Goethe, Mrs. Somerville, and others, whom one would not expect to find in the midst of such barren material toil. I also made the acquaintance of a miner—a hired laborer—who had sent all the way to Boston for a copy of Tennyson's "Idyls," knew "In Memoriam" by heart, and was an enthusiastic admirer of Mrs. Browning. One of my first visitors, on reaching San Francisco, was an old Oregon farmer, who called to know whether I had ever seen the Brownings—what was their personal appearance—what sort of a man was Tennyson, also Longfellow, Whittier, and various other poets. Verily, no true poet need despair—

"His words are driven
Like flower-seeds by the far winds sown,
Where'er, beneath the sky of heaven,
The birds of Fame have flown"—

and, also, where such birds have not flown. If I knew, as Tennyson does, that a poem of mine made an imprisoned sailor, in the long Arctic night, shed tears, I would smile upon the critic who demonstrated, by the neatest process of logic, that there was no veritable afflatus to be found in me.

The next day we returned to Nevada—my companion, much less enthusiastic than before, taking the stage, while

I galloped back with a led horse attached to my right arm. The day was overcast, with a presentiment of ill in the atmosphere. It was that anxious, oppressed, congested feeling, which Nature often experiences before a rain, when life looks cheerless, and hope dies in the soul of man. Anywhere else I should have laid my hand on *The Book*, and affirmed that rain would come—and even here, rain *did* come. I did not believe my ears, when I heard the pattering in the night—I could scarcely believe my eyes, when I looked abroad in the morning, and saw the dust laid, the trees washed and glittering, and the sky as clear and tranquil a blue as—no matter whose eye. We were to go to North San Juan, an enterprising little place on the Middle Yuba, ten miles off; and, in spite of bruised bones, there was no thought of fatigue. With the help of that exquisite air, we could have climbed Chimborazo.

This time, however, it was a light, open buggy and a capital black horse. I have rarely seen better or more intelligent horses than there are in California. Probably the long journey across the Plains sifted the stock, the poorer specimens dropping by the way, as many humans do, blood and character holding out to the end. Be this as it may, I made the acquaintance of no horse there to whom I would not willingly have done a personal favor. Merrily we rattled up the planked street of Nevada, around the base of the Sugar Loaf, past the mouths of mining drifts, and the muddy tails of sluices, and into a rolling upland region, about half stripped of its timber, where every little glen or hollow was turned upside down by the miners. After a drive of three or four miles, the blueness of the air disclosed a gulf in front, and we prepared for a descent to the bed of the South Yuba.

It was a more difficult undertaking than we were aware of. The road plunged down the steep at a pitch frightful to behold, turning and winding among the ledges in such a manner that one portion of it often overhung another. Broad folds of shade were flung into the gulf from the summits far above,

but the opposite side, ascending even more abruptly, lay with its pines and large-leaved oaks, sparkling, in the clearest sunlight. Our horse was equal to the emergency. Planting himself firmly on his fore-feet, with erect, attentive ears, he let us carefully, step by step, down the perilous slopes. With strong harness, there is really no danger, and one speedily gets accustomed to such experiences.

The northern bank, as beautifully diversified with picturesque knolls and glens as the rapidity of the descent would allow, confronted us with an unbroken climb of a mile and a half. Luckily we met no down-coming team on the way, for there was no chance of passing. At the summit, where there is a little mining-camp called Montezuma, we again entered on that rolling platform, which like the *fjelds* of Norway, forms the prominent feature of this part of the Sierra Nevada—the beds of the rivers lying at an average depth of two thousand feet below the level of the intervening regions. Looking eastward, we beheld a single peak of the great central chain, with a gleaming snow-field on its northern side. Montezuma has a tavern, two stores, and a cluster of primitive habitations. The *genus* “loafer” is also found—no country, in fact, is so new that it does not flourish there. Far and wide the country is covered with giant pines, and not a day passes but some of them fall. They are visibly thinning, and in a few years more, this district will be scorched and desolate. It is true young trees are starting up everywhere, but it will be centuries before they attain the majesty of the present forests.

Pursuing our winding way for three miles more through the woods, we saw at last the dark-blue walls of the Middle Yuba rise before us, and began to look out for San Juan. First we came to Sebastapol (!), then to some other incipient village, and finally to our destination. North San Juan is a small, compact place, lying in a shallow dip among the hills. Its inhabitants prosecute both drift and hydraulic mining, with equal energy and success. As at Timbuctoo, the whole

mass of the hill between the town and the river is gold-bearing, and enormous cavities have been washed out of it. The water descends from the flumes in tubes of galvanized iron, to which canvas hose-pipes, six inches in diameter, are attached, and the force of the jets which play against the walls of earth is really terrific. The dirt, I was informed, yields but a moderate profit at present, but grows richer as it approaches the bed-rock. As each company has enough material to last for years, the ultimate result of their operations is sure to be very profitable. In the course of time, the very ground on which the village stands will be washed away. We passed some pleasant cottages and gardens which must be moved in two or three years. The only rights in the gold region are those of miners. The only inviolable property is a "claim." Houses must fall, fields be ravaged, improvements of all sorts swept away, if the miner sees fit—there is no help for it.

The next morning, we drove back to Nevada betimes, in order to reach Grass Valley before evening. Before taking leave of the pleasant little town, where we had spent three delightful days, I must not omit to mention our descent into the Nebraska Mine, on the northern side of Manzanita Hill. This is as good an example of successful drift mining as can readily be found, and gave me a new insight into the character of the gold deposits. All the speculations of the early miners were wholly at fault, and it is only within the last four or five years that anything like a rational system has been introduced—that is, so far as so uncertain a business admits of a system. Hydraulic mining, as I have before stated, is carried on in those localities where gold is diffused through the soil; but drift mining seeks the "leads"—mostly the subterranean beds of pre-Adamite rivers—where it is confined within narrow channels, offering a more contracted but far richer field.

These ancient river-beds are a singular feature of the geology of the Sierra Nevada. They are found at a height of two thousand feet above the sea, or more, often cutting at right angles through the present axis of the hills, jumping

over valleys and re-appearing in the heights opposite. One of them, called the "Blue Lead," celebrated for its richness, has been thus traced for more than a hundred miles. The breadth of the channels varies greatly, but they are always very distinctly marked by the bluff banks of earth, on each side of the sandy bed. Their foundation is the primitive granite—upon which, and in the holes and pockets whereof, the gold is most abundant. The usual way of mining is to sink a shaft to the bed-rock, and then send out lateral drifts in search of the buried river. The Nebraska Company at Nevada has been fortunate enough to strike a channel several hundred feet wide, and extending for some distance diagonally through the hill. Until this lead was struck, the expenses were very great, and a considerable capital was sunk; but now the yield averages ten thousand dollars per week, at least three-fourths of which is clear profit.

One of the proprietors, who accompanied us, was kind enough to arrange matters so that we should get a most satisfactory view of the mine. After having been arrayed, in the office, in enormous India-rubber boots, corduroy jackets, and sou'-westers, without distinction of sex, we repaired to the engine-house, where the sands of the lost Pactolus are drawn up again to the sunshine, after the lapse of perhaps five hundred thousand years. Here, my Eurydice was placed in a little box, from which the dirt had just been emptied, packed in the smallest coil to avoid the danger of striking the roof on the way down, and, at the ringing of a bell, was whisked from my eyes and swallowed up in the darkness. I was obliged to wait until the next box came up, when, like Orpheus, I followed her to the shades. A swift descent of six hundred feet brought me to the bed-rock, where I found those who had gone before, standing in a passage only four or five feet high, candles in their hands, and their feet in a pool of water.

Square shafts, carefully boxed in with strong timbers, branched off before us through the heart of the hill. Along the bottom of each was a tram-way, and at intervals of five

minutes, cars laden with gray river-sand were rolled up, hitched to the rope, and speedily drawn to the surface. Following our conductor, we traced some of these shafts to the end, where workmen were busy excavating the close packed sand, and filling the cars. The company intends running their drifts to the end of their claim, when they will commence working back toward the beginning, cleaning out the channel as they go. Probably, three or four years will be required to complete the task, and if they are not very unreasonable in their expectations, they may retire from business by that time. We sat down for half an hour, with the unstable, sandy ceiling impending over our heads, and watched the workmen. They used no other implements than the pick and shovel, and the only difficulty connected with their labor was the impossibility of standing upright. The depth of the sand varied from three to six feet, but the grains of gold were scantily distributed through the upper layers. In one place, where the bed-rock was exposed, we saw distinctly the thick deposits of minute shining scale, *in situ*.

The air was very close and disagreeable, and the unrelieved stooping posture so tiresome, that we were not sorry when the guide, having scraped up a panful of the bottom sand, conducted us by watery ways, to the entrance shaft, and restored us to daylight. The sand, on reaching the surface, is tilted down an opening in the floor, and is instantly played upon by huge jets of water, which sweep it into a long sluice. Here it is still further agitated by means of riffles across the bottom, and the gold is caught in grooves filled with quicksilver. Every week, the amalgam thus produced is taken out and assayed. The tailings of these sluices are frequently *corraled* (a California term for "herded" or "collected"), and run through a second sluice, or turned into some natural ravine, which is washed out twice a year. In spite of this, a considerable percentage of the gold, no doubt, escapes. There is a gentleman in Nevada, who owns a little gully, through which runs the waste of a drift on the hill above. He had the

sagacity to put down a sluice and insert quicksilver, thinking sufficient gold might be left in the sand to pay for the experiment; and his net profits, from this source, amount to fifteen thousand dollars a year.

The pan of dirt brought up with us, having been skilfully washed in the old-fashioned way, produced a heap of mustard-seed grains, to the value of five or six dollars, which was courteously presented to my wife as a souvenir of her visit. Those who predict the speedy failure of the gold of California, do not know what wonderful subterranean storehouses of the precious metal still lie untouched. The river-bars were but as windfalls from the tree.

7

TRAVELING IN THE SIERRA NEVADA

San Juan was the northern limit of our mountain wanderings. I then turned southward—having so disposed of my time, that a fortnight would be devoted to the mining regions between the Yuba and the Stanislaus. Leaving Nevada on Thursday afternoon, we drove over to Grass Valley, where Mr. E——— had arranged for my discourse in the theatre that evening. I found that the announcement had been made with more zeal than modesty. When that gentleman asked me, before starting on his journey of preliminaries: “What shall I put on the posters in addition to your name?” I earnestly charged him to put nothing at all. “If the subject of the lecture will not attract auditors, I must do without them; and I shall never be guilty of blowing my own trumpet.” I leave the reader to imagine my feelings, when, on entering Grass Valley, the colossal words, “The world-renowned traveler and historian!!!” stared at me from every blank wall. And so it was wherever I went. My agent’s indiscreet zeal made me appear, to the public, not only as a monstrous self-

glorifier, but also as arrogating to myself a title to which I had no claim. "The printers would have it so," was his meek excuse.

Grass Valley and Nevada, being only four miles apart, and very nearly of the same size and importance, are, of course, deadly rivals. Curiously enough, this fact was the occasion of some pecuniary detriment to myself. The circumstance was, at the same time, laughable and vexatious. In the evening, shortly before the appointed hour, a gentleman approached me with a mysterious air, and, after some beating about an invisible bush, finally asked, plumply: "Are you going to lecture tonight for the benefit of the Nevada people?" "What do you mean?" I exclaimed, in great astonishment. "Why," said he, "it is reported that the Society in Nevada has engaged you to come here, as if on your own account, so that *we* sha'n't know anything about it, and they are to have the profits!" "What do you take me for?" I asked, indignant at such a mean suspicion; "but even if *I* were capable of it, the Nevada people are above such trickery." "Well," said he, "I will hurry out and correct the impression, as far as possible; for it is going to prevent scores of people from coming to hear you."

My next point was Forest Hill, a new mining camp, situated on the left ridge between the North and Middle Forks of the American River. The distance was more than thirty miles, over a very wild and broken portion of the mountains, and I was obliged to hire a two-horse buggy and driver, at an expense of \$35 for the trip. A miner from Michigan Bar, returning homeward, also joined us, and his knowledge of the road proved indispensable. We took an eastward course on leaving Grass Valley, crossing bleak, disforested hills, where the dust was frightfully deep and dry; then, approaching Buena Vista Rancho, plunged by degrees into the woods, where the air was cool and balsamic, and the burnt ground was hidden under a golden plumage of ferns. The road at last dropped into a linked success of dells, which en-

chanted us with their beauty. The giant pillars of the forest rose on all sides, but here and there the pines fell back, leaving grassy knolls dotted with clumps of oak, or green meadows fringed with laurel and buckeye, or tangled masses of shrubbery and vines. There were also cottages and gardens, secluded in these Happy Valleys, where, one sighed to think, care, and pain, and sorrow, come as readily as to the bleakest moor or the rudest sea-shore.

For four or five miles we drove merrily onward through that Arcadian realm. The blue sky shone overhead, the pines sang in the morning wind, the distant mountains veiled themselves in softer purple, and the exquisite odors of bay and pine, and dry, aromatic herbs gave sweetness to the air. Then the scene became wilder, a rugged cañon received us—a gulf opened in front—broken, wooded steeps rose opposite, and we commenced the descent to Bear Creek, the first of the valleys to be crossed. It was, however, an easy task, compared with that of the South Yuba. The road was stony and sideling, to be sure, but not more than half a mile in descent.

At the bottom was a bridge—useless in the dry season—with a toll of a dollar and a half at the further end. A ruddy, bustling woman, who kept the toll-house and accompanying bar-room, received us with great cordiality. Hearing the driver address me by name, she exclaimed: "Why, are you Mr. Taylor? Excuse me for not knowing you! And that is your wife, I suppose—how do you do, Mrs. Taylor? Won't you have a bunch of grapes?" Into the house she popped, and out again, with a fine cluster of black Hamburgs. "Now then," she continued, "since we know one another, you must come and see me often." "With pleasure," said I; "and you must return the visit, though it's rather a long way." "Oh, I don't mind that," she rejoined; "but you must stop longer the next time you come by"—which I readily promised. Really, thought I, as we drove away, this is fame to some purpose. How friendly this woman became, as soon as she found out who I was! How much she must admire my writ-

ings! What a sublime contempt she has for time and space—inviting us to *come over often*, and visit her! My complacent reflections were interrupted by a chuckle from the driver. "Well," said he, "the old lady's rather took in. She thinks you're Mr. Taylor, that lives up t'other side o' the Buena Vista Rancho!"

Regaining the summit on the southern side, we found a rolling country, ruder and more broken than that we had passed through, and in half an hour more reached a large mining camp, called Illinoistown. It was eleven o'clock, and we determined to push on to Iowa Hill, eight or nine miles further, for dinner. As we approached the North Fork of the American, a far grander chasm than any we had yet encountered yawned before us. The earth fell sheer away to an unknown depth (for the bottom was invisible), while a mighty mountain wall, blue with the heated haze of noonday, rose beyond, leaning against the sky. Far to the east, a vision of still deeper gorges, overhung by Alpine peaks, glimmered through the motionless air. We had an uninterrupted descent of two miles, and a climb of equal length on a road hacked with infinite labor along the sides of the steeps, and necessarily so narrow that there were but few points where vehicles could pass. It was not long before we arrived at a pitch so abrupt that the horses, with all their good-will, could not hold back; we alighted and walked, enjoying the giddy views into the abyss, which enlarged with every turn of the road. The muddy river was already in sight, and the bottom seemed not far distant, when three heavy teams emerged from around a corner, dragging their slow length up the height. Our driver selected the widest part of the road, drove to the edge, and ran his near wheels into the outside rut, where they held firm, while the off portion of the vehicle dropped over the edge, and remained thus, half-suspended. There was barely space for the teams to graze past. We reached the bottom with tottering knees, and faces plastered with a thick mixture of dust and sweat.

The bridge-toll was two dollars—which, however, included a contribution for keeping the road on both sides in good repair, and was really not exorbitant. The road itself, considering the youth of the country, is a marvel. We found the ascent very tedious, as the horses were obliged to stop every fifty yards, and regain their wind. But all things have an end; and at two o'clock, hot, dusty, and hungry, we drove into Iowa Hill.

This was formerly a very flourishing mining town, but has of late fallen off considerably, on account of some of the richest leads giving out. In spite of a broad, planked street, hotels, express offices, and stores, it has rather a dilapidated appearance. At the tavern where we stopped for a dinner, the following notice was stuck up:

"CONSTABLE'S SALE"

"Fifty Chickens and Six Rose Bushes will be sold on Friday next."

The guests' parlor was, at the same time, the sitting room of the landlord's family, and, while we were waiting for dinner, the hostess entered into conversation with my wife. "Why won't you stop here this evening?" she asked. "We are bound for Forest Hill," was the reply. "But you might as well stop; our theatre is empty, and everybody would go." Thinking she referred to my lecture, my wife answered: "The engagement was made at Forest Hill for this evening." "I wish I could go," exclaimed the lady; "I *do* like to hear concerts. You give quartetts, of course, as there are four of you. Is he (pointing to the driver) the comic one? What is you husband—tenor or bass? I'm sure you could get our theatre at a minute's notice. We haven't had no concert for a long while; and if there's fun, you'd have lots of people!"

We started again at three, as there were still twelve miles to be gotten over. A scene of truly inspiring beauty now received us. Emerging from the woods, we found ourselves on the brink of a deep, wild, winding valley, up which streamed the afternoon sun, tinting its precipitous capes and their feathery mantle of forests with airy gold, while the inter-

vening gulfs slept in purple gloom. The more gradual slopes on either side were nobly wooded, with a superb intermixture of foliage. The road—broad, smooth, and admirably graded (costing, I am told, \$30,000)—wound around the hollows and headlands, sometimes buried in the darkness of oracular woods, sometimes poised in sunshine over the hazy deeps. Our journey across this magnificent valley was a transit of delight. There is nothing more beautiful anywhere in the Sierra Nevada.

Now, what do you suppose is the name attached to this spot? What melodious title enfolds in its sound a suggestion of so much beauty? It is called—conceal thy face, O modest reader! I write it with a blush mantling my steel-pen, down to the very point—"Shirt-tail Cañon!" Palsied be the profane tongue that first insulted Nature by bestowing it! The story is, that the first miner, washing in the stream, with nothing on but his shirt, was seen by the next comers, carrying up his gold in the tail thereof, like an apron, regardless of appearances. Be that as it may, this part of the Sierra Nevada has been made infamous by its abundance of the most condemnable names which a beastly imagination ever invented. A little further up in the hills is a mining-camp, called "Hell's Delight!" There is also "Bogus Thunder" not far off, and a village with the delicious appellation of "Ground Hog's Glory!" Hallelujah! what a field the future poets of California will have! Fancy one of them singing:

"When in Shirt-Tail cañon buds the grove,
And the larks are singing in Hell's Delight,
To Ground Hog's Glory I'll come, my love,
And sing at thy lattice by night!"

Or thus:

"My heart is torn asunder,
My life is filled with pain;
The daughter of Bogus Thunder
Looks on me with disdain!"

I have only given the most favorable specimens. There are some places, the names of which are current from mouth to mouth, but which, for obvious reasons, are never printed. Some of them are out-of-way camps, which will never become classic localities—but a spot of such remarkable beauty as the cañon we have just passed through (I will not repeat the name) deserves to be immediately redeemed. Let me suggest a title. I noticed a resemblance, in certain features, to a wild and beautiful valley in the Taygetus. Let it, therefore, be called “Sparton Cañon”—which will, at the same time, convey the idea of the original name to the classical traveler. I call upon ye, inhabitants of Iowa Hill, Forest Hill, Yankee Jim’s, Mount Hope, and Hell’s Delight, to accept this name (if you cannot find a better) and let the present epithet perish with the wretch who first applied it!

Toward sunset we reached Yankee Jim’s—a very picturesque and cheerful little village, in spite of its name. Thence, there were four miles along the summit of a ridge covered with gigantic pines and arbor vitæ (the latter often 200 feet high), to Forest Hill. The splendor of the sunset-glow among these mountains is not to be described. The trees stood like images of new bronze, inlaid with rubies—the air was a sea of crimson fire, investing the far-off ridges with a robe of imperial purple—while dark-green and violet hues painted the depths that lay in shadow. The contrasts of color were really sublime in their strength and fierceness.

We wandered off the trail, and, before knowing it, found ourselves in the bottom of a weird glen, called the “Devil’s Cañon.” The dusk was creeping on; sheets of blue smoke, from fires somewhere in the forest, settled down between the huge, dark trunks; unearthly whispers seemed to float in the air; and the trail we followed became so faint in the gloom as barely to be discerned. I thought of the “Wolf’s Glen,” in *Der Freischütz*; and “Samiel, come! appear!” was on my lips. The only exit was by climbing a bank which seemed almost perpendicular. By springing out and holding on the

upper side of the vehicle, we prevented it from capsizing, regained the proper trail, and ere long reached Forest Hill. Mr. Webster, the express agent, kindly tendered us the hospitalities of his house—the repose of which was most grateful after our long journey.

Forest Hill is a charming little place, on the very summit of the lofty ridge overlooking the Middle Fork of the American, and at least three thousand feet above the sea. The single broad street is shaded by enormous pines and oaks, which have been left standing as the forest is thinned away. The hill is perforated with drifts, which run under the town itself; and, as they settle, will some day let it down—as recently occurred at Michigan Bluffs, where the people awoke one morning to find one side of the street five feet lower than the other. Forest Hill is a new and successful camp, and probably secure for two or three years yet. When the leads fail, it will fall into ruins, like Wisconsin Hill.

From a point near the village, we had a fine view of the main chain of the Sierra Nevada, dividing the waters of the American from Carson Valley. Pyramid Peak (which rises to the height of near twelve thousand feet) was clearly visible, with a few snow-fields yet lingering on its northern side. Directly opposite to us lay Georgetown, my destination for the night; but the great gulf of the Middle Fork intervened; and while the distance, in an air-line, was not more than five miles, it was ten miles by the bridle-path across, and *thirty* by the wagon-road which we were obliged to take. This will give some idea of the grand fissures by which this region is divided.

The journey from Forest Hill to Georgetown was so tedious, so fatiguing, and so monotonous, that I have no mind to say much about it. Our vehicle was an old-fashioned carriage, with seats about six inches apart. Being wedged in so tightly, we were doubly sensitive to the incessant furious jolts of the road; while, the day being intensely hot and still, the dust arose in clouds, which rarely allowed us to open our

eyes. There were fifteen mortal miles of jolting down the gradually descending ridge to Murderer's Bar (another name!) and then fifteen miles up a similar ridge to Georgetown. Here and there, we had a pleasant bit of landscape; but generally, the scenery was tame, compared with that of the previous day.

Georgetown is one of the oldest mining camps in the State. I heard of it in 1849, although my trip did not extend so far north. The place has a compact, quiet, settled appearance, which hints at stagnation rather than progress. The hotel is a very primitive affair—the bed-rooms being simply stalls, divided from one another, and from the sitting-room by muslin partitions. The theatre is a bankrupt church: nothing seems to flourish except drinking saloons. Mining was at a low ebb at the time of my visit, and many persons had taken up gambling instead. Nevertheless, there are several jolly and genial gentlemen in the place, and its atmosphere of leisure was rather attractive to me than otherwise. After rising in season, next morning, for the journey to Placerville, I had the satisfaction of rousing the sleeping stable-men, and waiting a full hour in the growing dawn before they were ready with the vehicle. Across the way was a drinking saloon, in which a company of gamblers, who had been sitting there the evening before, were still plying their trade, with haggard faces, and blood-shot eyes. The law against gambling is quite inoperative in the mining districts, as the Maine Liquor Law, or any other statute repressing the coarse, natural appetites of men would be. The ruder the toil, the ruder the indulgence for which it pays. So long as the population of these places fluctuates according to the mineral wealth, and the moral influence which springs from a stable society is wanting, this must continue to be the case. I see no help for it. Men *will* have cakes, though stuffed with nightshade berries; and ale, though it be hell-broth.

It was fairly sunrise before we got away from Georgetown, and the temper with which I began the day's journey was

not sweetened by the knowledge that I had lost an hour of precious sleep to no purpose. But the balmy air, the golden light, and the soothing flavor of a sedative herb worked their accustomed magic, and I reserved my discontent for the heat and dust to come. We traveled for six miles, or more, through a succession of pleasant little valleys, all more or less populated, and, consequently, ravaged and devastated by pick and spade. In place of the green meadows, set in circles of glorious forest, as in 1849, there were unsightly heaps of dirt and stones, and naked hill-sides, perforated with drifts, and spanned by lofty flumes, from which poured torrents of liquid mud, rather than water. Nature here reminds one of a princess, fallen into the hands of robbers, who cut off her fingers for the sake of the jewels she wears.

The passage of the South Fork of the American, which followed, resembled that of the other branches, on a smaller scale. Once on the summit, two miles across the flat top of the ridge brought us to the brink of a narrow, winding valley, in the bottom of which lay Placerville. Passing between rows of neat cottages, shaded with young cottonwoods, or embowered in trellises of passion-flower and Australian pea, we reached the business portion of the town—jammed in the narrow bed between the hills, compact, paved, and bustling—and halted at the Cary House. To travelers coming from Utah, who have lived ten days on salt pork, and drank the alkaline waters of Humboldt River, this hotel must seem a veritable Elysium; and even to us, who had had no breakfast, and were unconscionably hungry, it was a welcome haven. Clean, comfortable rooms, and an obliging host, seconded the first impression, and I did not so much wonder at the toughness of the meats, on learning that there is but one butcher in the place, who buys out or competitively ruins, all rivals.

The diggings around Placerville are among the oldest in California. The place was known, in 1849, as "Hangtown," but having become a permanent centre of business, and the



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capital of Eldorado County, the original name (suggestive of Lynch law) was very properly dropped. I cannot say, however, that property is much more secure than under the old *régime*. A few days before our arrival, the County Treasurer's office was broken into, and the public funds, amounting to \$8,000, carried off. Scarcely a day passed during our sojourn in the mountains, without our hearing of some store or express office being plundered, and it did not once happen that the thief was caught. As the currency is specie (banks being prohibited by the Constitution), money is a serious embarrassment. Besides, it cannot be identified, if stolen. One result of this prohibition is, that many capitalists, having no secure place of deposit, bury their money until they need it. From one end of California to the other, coin is potted and put into the earth for safekeeping. Often, when a farmer wishes to make an investment, you may see him measuring so many feet from such a tree, at such an angle with such another tree, etc., until he has found the right spot, when he will dig you up five, or ten, or twenty thousand dollars. This is a phenomenon which I commend to the attention of political economists.

To return to Placerville. The sides of the hills around are scarred with surface-mining and penetrated with drifts, while the stamps of quartz-mills may be heard pounding in the valley. Ditches, brought from the river twenty-seven miles

above, are carried along the summits of the ridges, where they not only furnish means for washing the dirt, but occasionally irrigate gardens on the slopes. The best placers, I was told, are exhausted, and mining in the immediate neighborhood of the town is rather precarious, at present. I was more interested in visiting the reservoir of the Water Company, on a height some three or four miles distant. The cost of the ditch, fluming, etc., was upwards of \$750,000. No idea can be formed of the immense labor bestowed on such works, along the whole range of the Sierra Nevada. There has been some wild engineering, it is true, and many of the works might have been constructed at half the expense; yet they are none the less an exhibition of the colossal enterprise of the new country.

In the afternoon, we paid a visit to a quartz mill, in a little ravine behind the town. The propelling power is steam, and the capacity of the mill twenty stamps, which will crush about one hundred tons of rock per week. These stamps are simply heavy iron *pounders*, lifted by the action of cogs on a main shaft, which turns behind them, and then allowed to fall on the pieces of broken quartz, which are fed in below. A stream of water flows constantly over the bed whereupon they fall, carrying away the powdered rock, after it has been reduced to sufficient fineness, over an inclined plane, at the bottom of which it is gathered into a sluice. The quicksilver then separates the gold in the usual way. No use, I believe, has yet been made of the refuse quartz-powder; but I should think it might be profitably employed in the manufacture of stone-ware. The plan of working is the simplest that can be devised. In many places, the old Spanish *arastra* is still employed. This is a hopper, in the centre of which is an upright shaft turned by horse-power, in the same manner as a cider-mill. From the shaft project two horizontal bars, at the end of which heavy stones are suspended, while the hopper is filled with broken quartz. By the turning of the shaft, the stones are dragged over the quartz, slowly crushing and reducing it. It is a tedious, but very cheap manner of extracting the gold.

8

THE SOUTHERN MINES

Hitherto, my journeys in the Sierra Nevada had been entirely over new ground; but now, I was to revisit the field of my adventures in 1849. I looked forward with much interest to seeing again the bear-haunted woods, the glens where I had been lulled to sleep by the baying of the wolves, and where a chorus of supernatural voices sang to my excited imagination. The fresh, inspiring beauty of those scenes was still present to my eye, and I did not doubt that I should find them, if possible, still more attractive since the advent of civilization.

The first point to be reached was Jackson, the capital of Amador county, about thirty-five miles from Placerville. As it was a cross road, traversing the ridges at right angles, this was an ample journey for one day. We were obliged to start before sunrise, taking the Folsom stage as far as Mud Springs, whence, after a delay of an hour, another vehicle set out for Drytown. This interval we employed in getting breakfast, which, had quantity and quality been reversed, would have been a good meal. The table-cloth, from its appearance, might have lain all night in a barnyard, trampled by the feet of cattle; upon it were plains of leathery beef, swimming in half-congealed tallow, mountains of sodden potatoes and leaden biscuit, with yellow, stratified streaks of potash, and seas of black, bitter fluid, which—mixed with damp, brown sugar, and cold, thin milk—was called coffee. Satan would have rejoiced to see the good gifts of God so perverted. We starved in the midst of plenty. It was

“Victuals, victuals everywhere,
And not a bit to eat.”

Presently the stage came along. It was a square-bodied machine, with imperfect springs, drawn by two horses. The

seats were hard and flat, and covered with slippery leather. As Cawper says, "The slippery seat betrayed the sliding part;" and one was obliged to be on the look-out, lest he should find himself on the floor of the vehicle in descending the hills.

The country through which we drove, though at a considerable elevation above the sea, was comparatively level. It was sparsely timbered, and more brown and scorched in appearance than the hot plains below. Here and there, however, were some pleasant little valleys—still pleasant to the eye, though cruelly mutilated by the gold-diggers. Quartz-mills, driven by steam, were frequent; I could not, however, ascertain their proportion of success. I was struck with the great variety of opinion regarding quartz-mining among those with whom I conversed. I made it a point to ascertain the views of intelligent men, for the purpose of drawing juster conclusions. I found about an equal number of the sanguine and desponding. Some said: "The richest yield is at the top of the vein; it gradually runs out as you go downward"—while others affirmed, with equal certainty: "The gold increases as you approach the bed-rock; and it is very evident that quartz-mining will give a deeper return as the drifts are sunk deeper." Most of them, however, considered the auriferous harvests of California as tolerably certain for the next fifty years.

After several additional miles, through the same torn and devastated region, offering very little to gratify the eye, we reached Drytown. This is a village of four or five hundred inhabitants, in a district once famed for its rich placers. The only interest it had for us was, that it gave us a dinner and an hour's respite from our jolting stage-coach. Both these refreshments were welcome, as we still had ten or twelve miles to Jackson.

I now began to look out for remembered land-marks; but after a time gave up all hopes of recognizing anything which I had seen before. In 1849, I had traveled this road on foot,

plodding along through noble forests, which showered their suspended rain-drops upon my head, rarely catching a view of the surrounding hills. Now, the forests are cut away; the hollows are fenced and farmed; the heights are hot and bare; quartz-mills shriek and stamp beside the road, and heavy teams, enveloped in dust, replace the itinerant miners, with wash-bowl on back and pick in hand. The aspect of this region is therefore completely changed. Even the village of Amador, which I remembered as a solitary ranche, was no longer to be recognized. The changes were for the worse, so far as the beauty of the scenery is concerned.

After crossing Dry Creek, the road ascended a long, gradual slope, on gaining the crest of which, I cried out in delight at the vision before us. The level, crimson rays of the sun streamed through the hazy air, smiting the summits of the mountains with a bloody glow. In the valley, two miles off, lay Jackson, half hidden by belts and groups of colossal pines. High in the east towered the conical peak of The Butte, which *my* feet first scaled, and to which I gave the name of Polo's Peak. In front, violet against the burning sky, was Mokelumne Hill and the picturesque heights around the Lower Bar—while far away, in an atmosphere of gorgeous color, we saw, or thought we saw, a pyramid of the Sierra Nevada. I knew the prominent features of the landscape, yet beheld them again, as in a dream.

My recollections of Jackson were of two rough shanties in the woods, where I tried to feed a starving horse on corn-meal, and afterward slept all night on a raw hide spread on the ground, beside an Indian boy. Now, in the falling twilight, we drove down a long, compact street, thronged with miners and traders, noticed the gardens in the rear, the church and court-house, and finally a two-story hotel, with a veranda filled with tropical flowers. As the sunset faded, and the half-moon shone in the sky, veiling whatever was peculiarly Californian in the appearance of the place, I could easily have believed myself in some town of the Apennines.

Midway between Jackson and Mokelumne Hill rises the Butte, a noble landmark far and wide through the mountains. On my way to the Volcano, in November, 1849, I climbed to its summit; and by right of discovery, conferred upon it the name of a brave old Indian Chieftain (Polo), who once lived in the neighborhood. I had hoped the name might remain, but was disappointed. It is now universally called the Butte (which means any isolated hill), and all my inquiries had no greater success than to ascertain that there was *one* man on the Mokelumne who had heard some other man say, years ago, that he (the other man) had heard it once called "Polo's Peak." My good name (as I conceived it to be) is forgotten, while "Bogus Thunder" and "New-York-of-the-Pacific" still exist. Such is life!

I was glad to find, however, that a tradition of my ascent is still preserved in the neighborhood. The summit is now a favorite place of resort for picnic parties, in the pleasant season. Not long ago, a romantic widow of Jackson made it a condition that she should be married there—which was accordingly done; clergyman, bride's-maids, friends, and refreshments all being conveyed to the top. There is no limit, however, to the eccentric fancies of brides. During the State Fair at Sacramento, a young couple succeeded in having themselves married on the platform of the great hall, in the view of two thousand people. While in Minnesota, I heard of a marriage behind the sheet of Minne-ha-ha. Fancy the happy pair standing with their feet in mud and their heads in spray, the clergyman yelling through the thunder of the fall: "Wilt thou have this man?" etc., and the bride screaming "I will!" at the top of her voice! Others have been married in the Mammoth Cave, on Table Rock, on the Washington Monument, in a balloon, for aught I know. Whenever I see such an external straining after sentiment, I always suspect an inner lack of it.

The next morning dawned warm and cloudless. Our day's journey was but eight miles to the village of Mokelumne

Hill, which we had seen the evening before, in the last rays of the sun, on the top of a mountain beyond the Mokelumne. I therefore hired a two-horse buggy, with a bright, intelligent driver, and we set out early, to avoid the noonday heat. After crossing some hills, which gave us lovely views toward Polo's Peak, we entered a narrow cañon, winding downward to the river between steep acclivities. The road, which was broad and of easy grade, had been excavated and built up with great labor; ditches of sparkling water ran along the opposite bank, and groups of bay, evergreen oak, and manzanita rose warm in the sunshine. While we were heartily enjoying the wild, shifting beauty of the glen, the driver suddenly turned around to me, saying:

"You know this place, don't you?"

"I seem to recognize parts of it," said I, "but everything is so changed, since '49, that I could not be certain."

"Why," he exclaimed, "the people say you are the first man that ever went through this cañon!"

Looking more closely, and taking the bearings of the hill above Lower Bar and the Butte, I saw that it was in reality the same ravine up which I had climbed after leaving the river, supposing that it might be a shorter passage to an Indian trail beyond. The old, forgotten picture came back suddenly, as if revealed by some lightning-flash in the dark of Memory. There was the gusty November sky; the wild ravine, wet with recent rains; dark pines rising from its depths; suspicious clumps of madrono and manzanita, which might conceal some grizzly bear; and myself, in well-worn corduroy armor, slowly mounting the rocky bed of the stream. This circumstance, which I had wholly forgotten, had been remembered by others, and the descent of the cañon had a double enjoyment to me, after the discovery.

We came upon the Mokelumne River at Middle Bar, a great bed of gravel and sand, now almost deserted, except by a few Chinamen in huge umbrella hats, who were foraging here and there, after the gleanings left by the white har-

vesters. A turn of the river concealed from my view the camp on the hill-side at Lower Bar, where Lieut. Beale and I had shared the hospitality of Baptiste, the *voyageur*, and where, during a two-days' rain, I had amused myself by watching Senator Gwin lay down the political wires which he afterward pulled to some purpose. There I ventured on my first and last speculation. I was persuaded to invest \$200 in an operation for damming the river. It promised well, the work was completed, the washings turned out splendidly, and I was in full hopes of receiving \$1,000 in return for my venture, when the rains fell, the river rose, and away went the dam. "Let me give you a serious piece of advice," said Washington Irving to me, one day, "never invest your money in anything that pays a hundred per cent!" And I never have, since then, and never will.

For the sake of old times, I should gladly have gone down to the Lower Bar, but the sun was already high and hot, and an ascent of near a mile and a half lay before us. The Mokelumne at this point, however, does not lie in a tremendous trough, like the Forks of the American and the Yuba; the steeps on either side are of irregular height, and broken by frequent lateral cañons. The scenery is, therefore, less savage and forbidding in appearance, but infinitely more picturesque. On reaching the summit of the mountain plateau, we saw before us the village—perched, as it were, on scattered hills, a loftier peak overhanging it on the east, a table-shaped mountain (with a race-course on the top), guarding it on the south, while elsewhere the steeps dropped off into gorges filled with dim blue mist. Though on a still grander scale, it reminded me somewhat of the positions of Perugia, or Narni, among the Roman Apennines.

In other respects, the resemblance was quite as striking. The dry soil, with its rich tints of orange and burnt sienna—the evergreen oaks, so much resembling the Italian ilex—the broad-leaved fig-trees in the gardens—the workmen with bare, sunburnt breasts—the *dolce far niente* of a few loung-

ers in the shade—and the clear, hot, October sky, in which there was no prophecy of winter, all belonged to the lands of the Mediterranean. If we had here the grace which Art has cast over those lands, thought I, we might dispense with the magic of their history.

Bidding a reluctant good-bye to Mokelumne Hill, next morning, we continued our journey southward across the mountains—our next destination being San Andreas, the court-town of Calaveras county. The table-shaped mountain behind the former town is the water-shed between the Mokelumne and the Calaveras—the latter river having a broad and comparatively shallow basin, with numerous affluents, while the Mokelumne and the Stanislaus, to the north and south of it, flow through deep, precipitous troughs. After we had passed the summit, our road dropped into a picturesque, winding glen, beyond which rose the blue mass of the lofty Bear Mountain.

It was a journey of only eight miles to San Andreas, through a rolling, cheerful country, with some beginnings at cultivation. A farmer who was threshing his wheat in the open air informed me that the yield averaged forty-two bushels to the acre; this, of course, without manure, and with the most superficial ploughing. The vine grew with the most astonishing luxuriance wherever it was planted, and I have not the least doubt that the best wines of California will ultimately be produced from the hill-sides of the Sierra Nevada. As we approached the Calaveras river the range of Bear Mountain rose high and blue on our left like a last bulwark against the plain of the San Joaquin. The view from its summit is said to be magnificent.

At noon we reached San Andreas, a village of perhaps eight hundred inhabitants, scattered over the northern slope of a hill, whose conical summit overhangs it. The place is neither so picturesque nor so well-built as Mokelumne Hill, with the exception of the hotel, a new and spacious edifice of brick. Here, everything was neat and commodious, and we

congratulated ourselves on finding such agreeable quarters. The hot autumnal afternoon disposed to laziness, yet we could not resist the temptation of strolling through and around the town, running the gauntlet of the curious eyes of the loafers congregated about the doors of the drinking-saloons.

In their structure, these mining villages are very similar. The houses are built close against each other, as in a large city. The most of them are of wood, and one story in height. Here and there, you see a block of brick stores, two stories high, flat-roofed, and with iron doors and shutters, as a protection against fire. There are plank sidewalks, and very often the streets are planked, also. Awnings keep off the hot sun, and verandas are introduced wherever it is practicable. Behind the main street are clusters of shanties inhabited by the miners—small, dusty, barren of ornament, and usually standing alone, with a rough oven of stones and clay adjoining. On the outskirts of these are the still more rude and repulsive dwellings of the Chinese. The alleys between are strewn with rags, old clothes, broken bottles, and miscellaneous filth, and swarm with—fleas, at least. This portion of the village strikingly resembles the native towns in Central Africa. There are usually one hotel, one small church, a theatre of rough boards, and five-and-twenty dram-shops to a place. On pleasant locations in the vicinity, are the comfortable residences and gardens of the successful traders, the owners of "leads," or quartz-mills, and the holders of office.

Life in such a place, to a refined and cultivated man, must be rather dreary. There is already, it is true, some little society; but relaxation of any kind is irregular and accidental, rather than permanent. Women fail; reading (except of political newspapers) is an obsolete taste; and the same excess which characterizes labor is too often applied to amusements. On the other hand, there is a freedom from restraint—an escape from that *social tyranny* which is the curse of the Atlantic States—almost sufficient to reconcile one to the loss

of the other advantages of society. I do not think that the Californians, now that they have cast off their trammels, will ever voluntarily assume them again. The worst feature of the absorbing rage for gold is the indifference of the people to the morality of those whom they elect to office. No State in the Union has been, and still is, more shamefully plundered.

Reaching the slope of the hill, where a hot breeze, charged with rich, minty odors, blew in our faces, we climbed to the summit, which, as we now saw, was a level of about two acres, laid out and inclosed as the cemetery of San Andreas. A lofty cross is its appropriate crown. No roses were planted on the graves, but the manzanita and a sort of dwarf ilex grew in clusters. The place had a solemn, yet soothing and cheerful aspect. No nearer hills interrupted the azure circle of the air, wherein the distant mountains floated; the noises of labor, and trade, and profanity, and jollity, in the town below, blended into an indistinguishable hum; while, to the east and west, a gap in the mountains seemed purposely left, that the sun might give this spot his first and latest greeting. The predominant colors of the landscape were blue and a pale golden-brown, mottled with the dark, rich green of scattering trees. A range of irregular peaks to the east shut out the snowy chain of the Sierra Nevada, but a lofty mountain, near the head-waters of the Stanislaus, was visible, far in the south.

From the flat roof of the veranda, upon which our window opened, we enjoyed a delicious view of the sunset illumination of the landscape. Evening after evening, the same phenomenon had been repeated—a transmutation of the air into *fluid color*, of a pale crimson tinge, which lent itself to every object touched by the sun. The mountains shone like masses of glowing metal, and the trees near at hand stood as if formed of compact flame. During the few minutes of sunset the color changed into the purest vermillion, after which it gradually faded into dull purple, followed by an *after-glow* (as among the Alps), of faint golden radiance.

The wind always falls at this hour, and the atmosphere is balmy, and fragrant with the odor of dry herbs. The nights are cool, but not cold—making one blanket comfortable, and requiring no more.

We hailed the morrow, for it was to take us to the southern limit of our journey through the mining regions. Two weeks of such rough, dusty travel, unrelieved by a single day of rest, had made us heartily weary, while the scenery, grand as it is, is nevertheless too monotonous to inspire an unflagging sense of enjoyment. The stage-coaches are terribly uncomfortable, and the inhaling of an atmosphere of dust which effectually hides your complexion and the color of your hair in the course of two or three hours, is not one of those trifling discomforts to which you soon become accustomed. It is said not to be unhealthy—in fact, our lungs suffered no inconvenience from it—but it often produces violent inflammation in weak eyes. There are instances of persons having endangered their sight from this cause. The first symptom is an acute pain, intermittent in its character—which, if not allayed, terminates in ophthalmia more malignant than that of Egypt. Women are more subject to it than men, and the worst cases are probably those who have been accustomed to a life of unnatural semi-darkness at home.

At nine o'clock, the stage-coach from Mokelumne Hill to Sonora arrived, and we took passage to the latter place, thirty-four miles distant. As fate would have it, I was crammed into the narrow back-seat, beside a disgusting Chinaman. If there had been any enjoyment in the journey, this fact alone would have spoiled it. The stale, musky odor of the race is to me unendurable: no washing can eradicate it, and this fellow was not washed. Huc, in his travels in Tartary, refers to the peculiar smell of the Chinese, and states that the dogs always discovered him under any disguise, by the difference of his *bouquet*. I do not doubt the statement. I would undertake to distinguish between a Chinaman, a Negro, an Indian, and a member of the Caucasian race, in a perfectly dark room,

by the sense of smell alone. The human blossoms of our planet are not all pinks and roses; we find also the *datura stramonium*, the toad's-flax, and the skunk-cabbage.

Our course at first led in a southeastern direction, through one of the tributary valleys of the Calaveras, with the Bear Mountains rising grandly on our left. Here the drooping, elm-like evergreen oaks, which had so charmed us in the valley of Russian River, again made their appearance, and the landscapes were once more warm, idyllic, and characterized by exquisite harmony of color and outline. The hollows were less frequently scarred by surface-washings: the plough only had disturbed, in order to beautify, the face of Nature. On the other hand, it was evidently a region of gold-bearing quartz. In the neighborhood of Angel's, I noticed a number of mills, many of them running from twenty to thirty stamps. Some of these mills are said to be doing a very profitable business. They have effectually stripped the near hills of their former forests, to supply fuel for the steam-engines and beds for the sluices in which the gold is separated from the crushed rock. The bottoms of the sluices are formed of segments a foot thick, sawed off the trunks of pine-trees and laid side by side; yet such is the wear and tear of the particles of rock and earth, carried over them by the water, that they must be renewed every two or three weeks.

We found Vallecitos (an intermediate place,) to be a bran-new village of about three hundred inhabitants, having been burned to the ground a fortnight previous. The new houses were of wood, stuck side by side, like the old ones; and the place will probably burn again, every summer. There was a French hotel and restaurant, which our conductor scorned—halting before the "Valhalla," an open saloon, with lager beer attachment. A dinner of sour-kraut and boiled pork smoked upon the table; but the beer, which should have completed the three-fold chord of Teutonic harmony, was decidedly out of tune. It mattered little, however, as but five minutes were allowed us for the meal.

The worst part of the journey was still before us. The road wound for two or three miles up a shallow valley, walled on the right by a steep, level ridge, which denoted our approach to the Stanislaus River. In a dip of this ridge is the reservoir of the ditch which supplies the mines in the neighborhood. Our road led past it, and over a low "divide," into a glen thickly wooded with oak and pine. The soil was very stony, and our progress rough and painful, though rapid. In the middle of this glen, where it opened to the sun, stood a neat farm-house, with a melon patch and an orchard of luxuriant fruit-trees. Two miles beyond, crossing a ridge, and emerging from the thickest portion of the forest, we found ourselves on the brink of the great chasm of the Stanislaus.

This pass, or gorge, is only equalled by that of the North Fork of the American. The length of the descent is about two miles; but advantage is taken of little spurs and shoulders of the mountain to obtain a less difficult grade. The river was invisible, and we could only guess its distance below us by the perspective of the misty mountain-wall beyond. The scenery was of the most grand and inspiring character. Giant oaks and pines clung to the almost precipitous steepes; clumps of manzanita, covered with red berries, fringed the road, and below us yawned the gulf, full lighted by the afternoon sun, except to the eastward, where its sides so approach and overhang as to cast a perpetual shade.

I walked to the bottom, but preferred riding up the opposite ascent. The other passengers, who trudged on in advance, found their advantage in a rest of twenty minutes at the summit, and the hospitality of a farmer's wife, who regaled them with milk and hot biscuits. Before fairly reaching the top, I was surprised to see traces of mining operations, on all sides. On the left of the road was a deep chasm, resembling a tropical *barranca*, which appeared to have been entirely excavated by art. Beyond it, on a level tract which was left standing, like an island between two arms of the chasm, was an orchard of splendid peach-trees—the branches whereof trailed upon

the ground under the weight of their fruit. In the east rose a mountain-ridge—a secondary elevation of the Sierra Nevada; for it appeared to overlook all between it and the central line of snowy pyramids. We entered a broad basin, inclining to the south, and drained by winter streams, which join the Stanislaus further down. Everywhere the soil was dug up, and turned up, and whirled upside down.

Presently, cottages and gardens offered a more cheerful sight, and the reservoir which supplies the mining companies of Columbia with water lay spread out before us like a lake, reflecting in its bosom the houses and spires of the town beyond. We were surprised and delighted at the extent and evident stability of the place. The population cannot be less than three thousand. There are solid blocks of buildings, streets of stores, a wide extent of suburban cottages dotting the slopes around, and all the noise and life of a much larger town. The airy verandas, festooned with flowering vines, the open windows, the semi-tropical character of the trees and plants, make a very different impression upon the visitor from that produced by Nevada or Grass Valley. Although scarcely a degree and a half apart, there are still the distinctive traits of North and South. In the population you find something of the same difference—the Northern emigrants taking to the northern mines by a natural instinct, and the Southern to the southern.

Columbia and Sonora, towns of nearly equal size, are only four miles apart—rivals, of course. The broad valley lying between is probably the most productive placer in California. It has been dug over a dozen times, and still pays handsomely. From the perseverance with which every particle of earth, down to the bed-rock, has been scraped away in many places, one sees that the soil must be everywhere gold-bearing. Such a scene of ravage I have never beheld. Over thousands of square rods, the earth has been torn and burrowed into, leaving immense pits, out of which project the crooked fangs of rocks, laid bare to the roots and knotted together in unimag-

inable confusion. A savage, coming upon such a place, would instantly say: "Here the devil has been at work!" Our road, sometimes, was a narrow ridge, left standing between vast tracts where some infernal blast of desolation seemed to have raged. I was involuntarily reminded of the words of a horn-pipe, more rowdy than refined:

Did you ever see the Devil,
With his iron wooden shovel,
Scratchin' up the gravel
With his big toe-nail?"

Here was the very place where he must have performed that operation. The earth seemed to have been madly *clawed into*, rather than dug out. I thought I had already seen some evidence of devastation wrought upon Nature by gold-mining, but this example capped the climax. It was truly horrible. You may laugh, you successful operators, who are now fattening upon the gains drawn from these incurable pits; but still I say, they are horrible. No cultivation, no labor will ever be able to remove such scars from the face of the earth.

I found Sonora a very lively, pleasant place. Many intelligent Southern gentlemen are among the inhabitants, and, though there is scarcely a greater amount of fixed society than elsewhere, what there is of it is genial and attractive. The mining operations are carried on, not only around the town, but in it and under it. The principal street is completely undermined in places, and I even saw a store which was temporarily closed, in order that the cellar might be dug out. The Placer House had been burrowed under within the past year, and a large quantity of gold extracted. Some of the inhabitants seemed to think that the whole town would be gradually removed, until all the houses rest on the bed-rock, below which there is nothing.

If a vein of gold could be found extending straight through the Sierra Nevada, there would soon be a tunnel, without cost, for the Pacific Railroad!

9

THE BIG TREES OF CALAVERAS

At Vallecitos where we had dined the previous day, in the Valhalla of the Teutonic gods, we were but twenty miles from the grove of Giant Trees, in Calaveras county. This grove was one of the things which I had determined to see, before setting out for California. I have a passion for trees, second only to that for beautiful human beings, and sculpture. I rank arboriculture as one of the fine arts. I have studied it in all its various schools—the palms of Africa, the cypresses of Mexico, the banyans and peepuls of India, the birches of Sweden, and the elms of New England. In my mind there is a gallery of master-pieces, which I should not be afraid to place beside those of the Vatican and the Louvre. Types of beauty and grace I had already—the Apollo, the Antinous, the Faun, even the Gladiator—but here were the Heraclidæ, the Titans!

Besides, on the American Continent, trees are our truest antiquities, retaining (as I shall show) the hieroglyphics, not only of Nature, but of Man, during the past ages. The shadows of two thousand years sleep under the boughs of Montezuma's cypresses, at Chapultepec: the great tree of Oaxaca is a cotemporary of Solomon, and even the sculptured ruins of Copan, Palenque, and Uxmal are outnumbered in years by the rings of trunks in the forests which hide them. In California, the only human relics of an earlier date than her present Indian tribes, are those of a race anterior to the Deluge; but those giants of the Sierra Nevada have kept, for forty centuries, the annual record of their growth. As well think of going to Egypt without seeing the Pyramids, as of visiting California, without making a pilgrimage to her immemorial Trees!

I procured a two-horse team, with driver, in Sonora, regardless of expense. Mr. E——, whose labors were now drawing to a close, also accompanied us. We had but two days for the trip—in all, sixty miles of very rough mountain-road—and therefore started with the first peep of dawn. As far as Vallecitos, our road was that which we had traversed in coming from San Andreas, crossing the great chasm of the Stanislaus. The driver, however, took another route to Columbia, leading through a still more terribly torn and gashed region, and approaching the town from the eastern side. Here were huge artificial chasms, over which the place seemed to hang, like Fribourg over its valley. The multitude of flumes, raised on lofty tressle-work, which crossed these gulfs—the large water-wheels—the zigzag sluices below, and the cart-roads running on narrow planes of different elevation into the various branches of the mines, with distorted masses of primitive rock sticking up here and there, formed, altogether, a picture so vast and grotesque as to make us pause in astonishment. I remember nothing like it in any other part of the world.

We breakfasted at the Broadway Hotel, and then hastened on, in order to reach Murphy's by noon. The gulf of the Stanislaus was crossed without accident, as it was rather too early for any other teams to be abroad on the road. The possibility of meeting another vehicle is the one great risk which haunts you, during such transits. Near Vallecitos, while crossing one of the primitive bridges, our "off" horse got his leg into a hole, injuring it rather severely, though not so as to prevent his going on. The miners carry their ditches and sluices across a road just as they please; and in order to save a few planks, bridge them with rough logs and the branches of trees, interspersed with irregular boulders, to hold them. "When a stick is too crooked for anything else, they make a bridge of it," growled the driver, who threatened to tear up a fence or a flume, and would have done so, had not the bridge been mended on our return.

At Vallecitos, we left the road to San Andreas, and took a trail leading eastward to Murphy's an old mining-camp, four or five miles distant. We passed through a succession of shallow valleys, which in spring must be lovely, with their scattered trees, their flowery meadows, and the green of their softly-rounded hills. They were now too brown and dry—not golden with wild oats, like the Coast Mountains, but showing the dull hue of the naked soil. In one of the broadest of these valleys lay Murphy's—a flourishing village until ten days previous, when it was swept away by fire. This was the *fourth* mining town destroyed during our visit! The cottage residences, standing alone in the midst of their gardens, escaped; but the business portion of the place, including the hotel, was utterly consumed.

The proprietors of the hotel, the Messrs. Perry, are also the owners of the Big Trees. They enjoy a wide reputation for their enterprise, and the good fare wherewith they regale the traveler. They had already erected a shanty among the ruins, and promised us dinner while the horses were feeding. My wife was kindly received by Mrs. Perry, and I was overwhelmed with cordial invitations to stop and entertain the Murphyites—which, to my regret, was impossible. We had, in fact, a miraculous dinner—everything was good of its kind, and admirably cooked. What more can be said? The claret was supreme, and the pears which we purchased for dessert dissolved in inexpressible fragrance upon the tongue. The farmer from whom we procured them presented me with a watermelon, Mr. P. added some fresh meat for our supper at the forest hotel, and we went our way rejoicing.

In the outskirts of the village were encamped companies of newly-arrived emigrants, among their shattered wagons and their weary cattle, and we met numbers of others on the way. From Luther's Pass at the head of Carson Valley, a trail turns southward, crosses the Sierra, and passing down the ridge above Silver Valley to the Big Trees, forms the most direct road from Carson River to the Southern mines. These

emigrants were now at the end of their toil and sufferings; but, instead of appearing rejoiced at the deliverance, their faces wore a hard and stern expression, with something of Indian shyness. The women, as if conscious that their sun-browned faces and their uncombed hair were not particularly beautiful, generally turned their heads away as we passed. Dirty, dilapidated, and frowsy as many of them were, they all wore hoops! Yes, even seated in the wagons, on the way, their dusty calicoes were projected out over the whiffletrees by the battered and angular rims of what had once been circles! It was an exhibition of sacrifice to fashion, too melancholy for laughter.

The valley of Murphy's is 2,000 feet above the sea, and lies at the foot of those long lateral ridges which connect the broken ranges called the Foot-Hills with the central ridge of the Sierra Nevada. The distance to the Big Trees is fifteen miles, with an additional ascent of 2,500 feet. Immediately on leaving the village, we entered a close, wooded cañon, down the bottom of which rushed the water of a canal, as if in its natural bed. It was delightful to drive in the shade of the oaks and pines, with the clear waters of a roaring brook below us—*clear* water being the rarest sight in these mountains. Gaining the summit of the ridge, we drove for miles over an undulating, but rapidly-ascending road, deep in dust and cut into disagreeable ruts by the wheels of emigrant wagons. Huge shafts of fir, arbor-vitæ, and sugar-pine, arose on all sides, and the further we advanced the grander and more dense became the forest. Whenever we obtained an outlook, it revealed to us hills similarly covered: only now and then, in the hollows, were some intervals of open meadow. The ditch, coming from far up in the mountains, still kept beside us, sometimes carved in the steep side of the hill, and sometimes carried across a valley on a wooden framework a hundred feet high.

The air perceptibly increased in coolness, clearness, and delicious purity. The trees now rose like colossal pillars, from

four to eight feet in diameter, and two hundred feet in height, without a crook or a flaw of any kind. There was no undergrowth, but the dry soil was hidden under a bed of short, golden fern, which blazed like fire where the sunshine struck it. We seemed to be traversing some vast columned hall, like that of Karnak, or the Thousand Columns of Constantinople—except that human art never raised such matchless pillars. Our necks ached from the vertical travels of our eyes, in order to reach their tops. Really, the Western hyperbole of tall trees seemed true, that it takes two men to see them—one beginning where the other leaves off.

Our progress, from the ascent, and the deep dust which concealed the ruts, was slow, and would have been tedious, but for the inspiring majesty of the forest. But when four hours had passed, and the sun was near his setting, we began to look out impatiently for some sign of the Trees. The pines and arbor-vitæ had become so large, that it seemed as if nothing *could* be larger. As some great red shaft loomed duskily through the shadows, one and then another of us would exclaim: "There's one!"—only to convince ourselves, as we came nearer, that it was not. Yet, if such were the courtiers, what must the monarchs be? We shall certainly be disappointed: nothing can fulfil this promise. A thick underwood now appeared, radiant with the loveliest autumnal tints. The sprays of pink, purple, crimson, and pure gold flashed like springles of colored fire amid the dark-green shadows. "Let us not ask for more," said I; "nothing can be more beautiful."

Suddenly, in front of us, where the gloom was deepest, I saw a huge *something* behind the other trees, like the magnified shadow of one of them, thrown upon a dark-red cloud. While I was straining my eyes, in questioning wonder, the road made a sharp curve. Glancing forward, I beheld two great circular—shot-towers? Not *trees*, surely!—but yes, by all the Dryads, those are trees! Ay, open your mouth, my good driver, as if your two eyes were not sufficient, while we

sit dumb behind you! What can one say? What think, except to doubt his senses? One sentence, only, comes to your mind—"there were giants in those days."

Between these two colossi, called The Sentinels, ran our road. In front, a hundred yards further, stood the pleasant white hotel, beside something dark, of nearly the same size. This something is only a piece of the trunk of another tree, which has been felled, leaving its stump as the floor of a circular ball-room, twenty-seven feet in diameter. Dismounting at the door, we were kindly received by the Doctor, and assured of good quarters for the night. The sun was just setting, and we were advised to defer the inspection of the grove until morning. Seating ourselves in the veranda, therefore, we proceeded to study The Sentinels, whose tops *three hundred feet* in the air, were glowing in golden lustre, while the last beam had passed away from the forest below them.

To my astonishment, they did not appear so very large, after all! Large they were, certainly, but nothing remarkable. At first, I was puzzled by this phenomenon, but presently remembered that the slender saplings (apparently) behind them, were in themselves enormous trees. In dwarfing everything around them, they had also dwarfed themselves. Like St. Peter's, the Pyramids, and everything else which is at once colossal and symmetrical, the eye requires time to comprehend their dimensions. By repeatedly walking to them, pacing round their tremendous bases, examining the neighboring trees, and measuring their height by the same comparison, I succeeded in gradually increasing the impression. When the last gleam of twilight had gone, and the full moon mounted above the forest, they grew in grandeur and awful height, until the stars seemed to twinkle as dew-drops on their topmost boughs. Then, indeed, they became older than the Pyramids, more venerable than the triune idol of Elephanta, and the secrets of an irrecoverable Past were breathed in the dull murmurs forced from them by the winds of night.

"Thank God that I have lived to see these works of His

hand!" was the exclamation with which I turned away, reluctantly driven in-doors by the keen, frosty air. Before a cheerful fire the doctor related to us the history of the discovery of the grove. When I was on the Mokelumne, in 1849, its existence was unknown. At the close of that year, some miners, prospecting high up in the mountains, are reported to have come upon some of the trees, and to have been laughed at, and called hard names by their friends, on account of their incredible stories. In the spring of 1850, however, a company on a tour of prospecting, hunting, and general speculation, happened to encamp in a valley about four miles distant. One of the men, pushing up the ridge, alone, found himself at last in the midst of the monstrous grove. He was at first frightened (I can well imagine it), then doubtful, then certain. Returning to the camp, he said nothing about the trees, knowing that he would only be called a liar, but informed the leader of the party that he had found signs of gold, or of deer, higher up, and offered to guide them. By this device he brought them all to the grove—and the story of the Big Trees soon afterward astonished the world.

But with discovery came also ruin. After the first astonishment was over, came the suggestion of a speculative mind—"Can't some money be made out of this here thing?" A plan was soon formed. One of the biggest trees must be cut down, barked, and the pieces of bark numbered, so that when put together again in the same order, they would, externally, exactly represent the original tree. Take them to New York, London, Paris—and your fortune is made. How to get the tree down? was the next question. A mass of solid wood, *ninety feet* in circumference, was clearly beyond the powers of the axe. Where was the saw, or the arms to wield it, which could do the work? But the prospect of money sharpens the wits, and this difficulty was finally overcome. Pump-augers were the thing! By piercing the trunk with a great number of horizontal bores, side by side, it might finally be cut asunder. Augers were therefore procured, and two sets of hands went to work.

After a steady labor of six weeks, the thing was done—but the tree stood unmoved! So straight and symmetrical was its growth, so immense its weight, and so broad its base, that it seemed unconscious of its own annihilation, tossing its outer branches derisively against the mountain winds that strove to overthrow it. A neighboring pine, of giant size, was then selected, and felled in such a way as to fall with full force against it. The top shook a little, but the shaft stood as before! Finally the spoilers succeeded in driving thin wedges into the cut. Gradually, and with great labor, one side of the tree was lifted: the line of equilibrium was driven nearer and nearer to the edge of the base: the mighty mass poised for a moment, and then, with a great rushing sigh in all its boughs, thundered down. The forest was ground to dust beneath it, and for a mile around, the earth shook with the concussion.

Yet, perhaps, it is as well that *one* tree should be felled. The prostrate trunk illustrates the age and bulk of these giants better than those which stand. We learn from it that the wood was sound and solid throughout; that the age of the tree was thirty-one hundred years; that it contained two hundred and fifty thousand feet of timber: and that, a thousand years ago, the Indians built their fires against its trunk, as they do now. The stump, as I said before, is the floor of a ball-room: higher up (or, rather further off), is a bowling-alley. The pine trees, forming the forest around the house, though apparently so small, average six feet in diameter, and over two hundred in height.

Our quarters at the little hotel were all that could be desired. Pure, ice-cold water, venison, delicious bread and butter, and clean beds, all combined to make us regret that our stay was so limited. At daybreak the Doctor summoned us, and we prepared for a stroll through the grove before sunrise. The great Trees, to the number of ninety, are scattered through the pine-forest, covering a space about half a mile in length. A winding trail, ascending one side of the glen,

and descending on the other, conducts to the principal trunks. They have all received names, more or less appropriate. Near the house is the "Beauty of the Forest," really a paragon of colossal elegance, though comparatively young. Her age is probably not more than two thousand years.

How cool, and silent, and balmy was the stupendous forest, in the early morn! Through the open spaces we could see a few rosy bars of vapor far aloft, tinted by the coming sun, while the crimson and golden sprays of the undergrowth shone around us, like "morning upbreking through the earth!" The dark-red shafts soared aloft rather like the great, circular watch-towers of the Middle Ages, than any result of vegetable growth. We wandered from tree to tree, overwhelmed with their bulk, for each one seemed more huge than the last. Our eyes could now comprehend their proportions. Even the driver, who at first said, "They're not so—*condemned* big, after all!" now walked along silently, occasionally pacing around a trunk, or putting his hand upon it, as if only such tangible proof could satisfy him.

We first visited the "Three Graces," then the "Miner's Cabin" and "Uncle Tom's Cabin." The two last are hollowed out at the bottom by Indian fires, which have burned themselves central chimneys far up the trunk. Either of them would give shelter to a family of moderate size. The next group bore the traces of fools. Some lovesick blockhead, visiting the grove in company with three ladies, one of whom looked coldly upon his suit, another sang, and another did something else, has fastened upon three of the trees marble tablets, inscribed severally, in letters of gold, "The Marble Heart(!)" "The Nightingale," and "The Salem Witch," I said to the Doctor: "Have you a ladder and a hammer about the house?" "Yes—why?" "Because if I were to remain here tonight, you would find those things smashed tomorrow morning." His furtive smile assured me that the search for the trespasser would not be very strict. Miss Avonia Jones, an actress, who was there a short time previous, be-

stowed her own name upon a tree, and likewise had a marble tablet prepared, regardless of expense. Fortunately the tablet happened to reach Murphy's, on its way to the grove, just before the fire, and was destroyed. Fancy one of those grand and awful trees bearing the name of "Avonia Jones!" Even Senator Gwinn, as I was informed, had his name cast on an iron plate, and sent to the Mariposa Grove, to be placed on one of the largest trees. Oh! the pitiful vanity of our race!

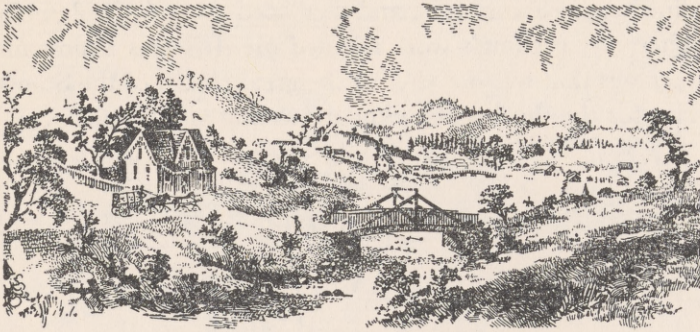
At the top of the glen stands the "Mother of the Forest," ninety-three feet in circumference, and three hundred and twenty-five feet high. Her bark, which has been stripped off to a height of one hundred and ten feet now represents her in the Crystal Palace at Sydenham. This was wanton wickedness. She now stands blasted, stretching her bare, reproaching arms high over the forest. She forms part of what is called the "Family Group," numbering twenty-four trees. Here we commenced the return trail, and soon came upon the "Father of the Forest," which surpasses everything else by his tremendous bulk. He lies upon the earth, as he fell, centuries ago. His trunk is one hundred and ten feet in circumference at the base, and his original height is estimated to have been four hundred and fifty feet! In contemplating him, one almost refuses to credit the evidence of one's senses. By counting a few of the rings, and making a rough estimate, I satisfied myself that his age could not have been less than *five thousand years!* The interior of the trunk is burned out, forming a lofty, arched passage, through which you walk for one hundred and eighty feet, and then emerge from a knot-hole! Not far off is another prostrate trunk, through which a man may ride on horseback for more than a hundred feet.

There are a variety of trees named after various States, also the "Old Maid" and "Old Bachelor," two lonely, leaning, dilapidated figures, and "Pike," a tall, gaunt trunk, not so inappropriately named. The largest of all the living trees is called "Hercules," and is, if I mistake not, ninety-seven feet in circumference. I suggested that his name should prop-

erly be changed to "The Patriarch." Young trees, sprung from the seeds, are seen here and there, but the soil seems insufficient to nourish many of them, until the older race passes away. The Doctor called my attention to a new and curious fact. In the earth, completely covered by the gradual deposits of centuries of falling leaves, are the trunks of the progenitors of these giants. The wood is almost black, and has a dry, metallic sound. In one place a living tree, between two and three thousand years old, is found to be planted astride of another trunk, entirely hidden in the soil! It is evident that eight, or perhaps ten, thousand years have elapsed since this race of trees first appeared on the earth. One is bewildered by the reflections which such a discovery suggests.

During our walk, we watched the golden radiance of the sun, as, first smiting the peaks of the scattered giants, it slowly descended, blazing over a hundred feet of their massive foliage, before the tops of the enormous pines were touched. This illumination first gave us a true comprehension of their altitude. While sketching The Sentinel afterwards, from the veranda, the laws of perspective furnished a new revelation. The hostess and my wife, standing together at the base of a tree, became the veriest dwarfs. Beyond them was what appeared to be a child's toy-cart—in reality the wagon of an emigrant family, which had arrived the evening before! Some of the young "Pikes," expert with their rifles, brought down a few cone-bearing twigs, two of which the Doctor presented to me, together with a large stick of timber, and a piece of bark, four inches thick, of a golden-brown color, and with the softness and lustre of velvet.

Botanists have now decided that these trees are akin to the California redwood, *Sequoia sempervirens*, and they will henceforth be known as the *Sequoia gigantea*, thereby settling the national quarrel as to whether they shall be called *Washingtonia* or *Wellingtonia*. It is singular that this discovery should not have been sooner made: a single glance at the cone is enough. It is very small, not one-fourth the size of a



SOUTH APPROACH TO JAMESTOWN

man's fist, containing a few thin, laminar seeds, something like those of a parsnip. As the tree will bear a degree of cold equal to zero, it may be successfully grown in the latitude of Washington. The growth is slow at first—so the gardeners in Sacramento and San Francisco inform me—but increases rapidly as the tree gains root.

Since the discovery of this grove, three others have been found, showing that the tree is not phenomenal in its appearance. One of these groves, near the head-waters of the Tuolumne, lies at an altitude of six thousand feet, and contains about four hundred trees, but few of which are thirty feet in diameter. The Mariposa Trees, on the road to the Yosemite Valley, number about three hundred, one of which is said to be one hundred and two feet in circumference. Visitors are divided in opinion as to which grove is grandest and most impressive in its character. But he who would not be satisfied with the Calaveras Trees is capable of preferring his own nondescript cottage to the Parthenon, and his own crooked legs to those of the Apollo Belvidere.

Taking a last look at these immemorial giants of the forest, as they stretched their tufted boughs silently in the sunshine, over the heads of the vassal trees, we drove down the mountain through the aisles of pine, and between the gem-like sprays of the thickets. In four hours we reached Murphy's,

dined again luxuriously, and then sped away for Columbia, where my evening's work awaited me. It seems almost miraculous that we should cross the great chasm of the Stanislaus for the third time, without meeting another team.

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CALIFORNIA, AS A HOME

At last we packed for a final departure from the mountains. The trip to Stockton, a distance of about fifty-five miles, was to be accomplished in a single day. At three o'clock in the morning we took our seats in the stage, and after picking up a sufficient number of passengers to fill the huge, swinging vehicle, emerged from Sonora by the lower entrance of the valley. The morning was chill, the road rough, and our ride remarkably tedious. After we had made ten or twelve miles, the sun rose, we breakfasted, and the scenery improved. There were three or four villages on the road, which had an air of permanence and prosperity, but the valleys were too narrow and too entirely given over to gold-mining to allow of farming to any great extent. The road was, at the same time, stony and dusty, and we were heartily glad when the settlement at Knight's Ferry, on the Stanislaus, announced our exit from the mountain region.

Knight's Ferry is a smart, busy place of near a thousand inhabitants. The broad bar which the river here makes is quarried up, and trenched in all directions by the indefatigable gold-miners. There is a large hotel, the chief energy of which appears to be expended on a spacious bar-room, well supplied with ice and liquors. We here changed stages, having the satisfaction of knowing that only thirty miles, for the most part of level road, separated us from Stockton. A few more long, sweeping undulations—the last subsiding waves of the Sierra Nevada—and we entered the great plain

of the San Joaquin. We lost, it is true, the pure mountain air, the blue chasms, the splendid pines, but we had no longer the dread of meeting vehicles, the danger of overturns, the jolts and the dry quagmires of dust. Merrily our coach rolled along over the level floor, between the high redwood fences, past occasional groves of live-oak, farm-houses, dusty orchards, wind-mills, turning in hot puffs of southern wind, and stacks of shining straw or snowy bags of grain. Ten rapid minutes, only, were allowed us for dinner, and by two o'clock we saw the spires of Stockton over the groves of scattering oaks which surround the town.

Broad, cheerful, watered streets, suburban gardens, neat churches, and a glimpse of shipping in the tide-water slough, gave us a pleasant initial impression of the place, which was not diminished by the clean, comfortable quarters we found at the Weber House. How delicious it was to sit in the open French windows, watching the golden afternoon light deepen into sunset color on the blue water, the groves of oak, the church-spires, and the dim mountain-ranges far away, knowing that our month of rude mountain-travel was over! Repose is always sweet, but never more so than after prolonged fatigue.

We were greatly delighted with our visit to the residence of Mr. Weber, the original proprietor of Stockton, who has transferred a tongue of land, between two arms of the slough, into a garden, and built himself a spacious house in the centre. There is no more delightful villa on Bellosguardo or the slopes of Fiesole. A thick hedge, outside of which is a double row of semi-tropical trees, surrounds the peninsula. The gate opens into a lofty avenue of trellis-work, where the sunshine strikes through pulpy bunches of amethyst and chrysolite, while, on either hand, beds of royal roses of every hue (except the impossible blue) fill the air with ripe odor. The house is low, but spacious, with wood-work of the native redwood, scarcely less beautiful than mahogany. Vine-covered verandas surround it and keep off the sun, and every

window discloses a vision of plants which would be the glory of any greenhouse on the Atlantic side.

In Mrs. Weber, I found an old acquaintance of my former visit. Well I remembered the day when, hot, hungry, and foot-sore, I limped up to the door of her father's ranche, in the valley of San José, and found her reading a poem of mine (no author ever had a more welcome introduction!)—when her father saddled his horse, and rode with me to the top of a mountain, and her own hands prepared the grateful supper and breakfast which gave me strength for the tramp to Monterey. It was pleasant to meet her again as the happy mistress of such a princely home.

The garden delighted us beyond measure. The walks were waist-deep in fuchsia, heliotrope, and geranium; the lemon verbena grew high above our heads, and the pepper trees, with their loose, misty boughs, hailed us as old friends from the skies of Athens. A row of Italian cypresses, straight and spiry as those which look on Florence from San Miniato, were shooting rapidly above the other growths of the garden. How they will transform the character of the landscape when, at last, their dark obelisks stand in full stature! Here, in the middle of October, all was bloom and warmth, as in our Atlantic Augusts. A week or two of heavy rain, in November, ushers in the winter, and the balmy skies, green turf, and sprouting daisies of January, announce the coming of another beautiful year. What a country is this for a home—if it were not quite so new!

Our passage was taken for Thursday, the 20th of October, so that but few days were left us on California soil, and we hastened back to San Francisco. We had already overstayed by a fortnight the time which we had allotted to our visit, but although private interests and sacred ties alike called us home, we could not conceal an emotion of sorrow and regret at the thought of leaving. We had found many kind friends in San Francisco, so that the charm of human associations was added to that of its climate and scenery. Besides the free,

liberal, sensible life of the place has its separate attractions. The society of San Francisco is a combination of two extremes—the aristocratic and democratic principles in sharp contrast—Puritanism in religion, and Sunday theatres—and between the two, a man of sense and reflection finds a clear space, where he may live and move untrammelled.

On Wednesday evening, I gave my final lecture, for the benefit of the Protestant Orphan Asylum—making, in all, *thirty-eight* lectures in California, in the space of eight weeks. As the first attempt to transplant the Great Institution to the Pacific Coast, the result was in the highest degree cheering. My visit was made at probably the most unfavorable period of the year—at the close of the dry season, when business is dull, and in the midst of violent political excitement—yet there was no single instance of failure. The people everywhere showed themselves wide-awake, intelligent, and appreciative.

Although my impressions of California have been scattered plentifully throughout the foregoing sketches, my readers may, like myself, feel the necessity of reproducing them in a final *résumé*, detached from my narrative of personal experiences. During the interval of ten years between my two visits, I traversed the three continents of the ancient hemisphere, passing though all zones of the earth (with the exception of the Antarctic); and therefore possessed the best possible means of verifying or correcting the impressions of the first visit by those of the second. This circumstance, I trust, may give additional weight to my opinions, even with those who may honestly differ from them.

The first thing to be considered, in discussing the character of a new country, is its climate. California possesses the great advantage of lying upon the western side of the continent, which, as compared with the eastern, is an isothermal difference equal to ten degrees of latitude. Thus, San Francisco, lying on very nearly the same parallel as Richmond, possesses the climate of Andalusia and Sicily—or Jacksonville, Florida,

on our Atlantic Coast. There are local differences, however, which give it an advantage over countries in the same latitude in Europe. Climate, it is well-known, is greatly modified by the character of the prevailing winds. California, like India, is exposed to the action of a periodical monsoon, blowing from the northwest during the summer, and from the southeast during the winter. The former wind, cooled by the Arctic current which sweeps downward along the coast, precipitates fog as it meets with the hot, dry winds of the interior; and the summer, in the valleys of the Coast Range, seems actually to be cooler than the winter. In the same manner, the dry, warm southeast winds, coming over the vast deserts of heated sand on both sides of the Colorado, heighten the winter temperature. The mean temperature of noonday, throughout the year, is remarkably equable, for such a latitude. The seasons seem to have shifted their parts, the winter being green and fragrant with flowers, and the summer brown and bare on the hills, while the forests of live oak, bay, redwood, and pine, rejoice in eternal verdure.

A record of temperature has been for nine years carefully kept by Dr. Gibbons, at San Francisco. The greatest cold in that time was 25 degrees, and the greatest heat 98 degrees. These may, therefore, be taken as the extremes, showing the *utmost* range of the thermometer. The difference is 73 degrees, but the average annual range is not more than 65 degrees. In New York and the New England States, it is near 130 degrees. At San Francisco, in 1853, the maximum was 88 degrees, and the minimum 40 degrees. Another peculiarity of the climate is the difference between the temperature of day and night. The mean daily range varies from 12 degrees to 23 degrees, being least in winter and greatest in summer. The nights, therefore, throughout the year are of a much more uniform temperature than the days—a fact which contributes very greatly to the health of the inhabitants, as well as to the vigor of vegetation. In the interior, where the heats of summer are much more intense than in

the coast valleys, the difference is still greater. The summer thus possesses a bracing element in the midst of her fiercest fires. California presents the anomaly of a semi-tropical climate, with all the inspiring and invigorating qualities of a Northern atmosphere.

In this respect, therefore, our Pacific Coast stands unequalled by any land in the world. It is not without drawbacks—for the cold coast-winds of summer, the unfathomable dust of autumn, and the first deluging rains of winter, are things to be endured—but no one, except a fool, expects to find absolute perfection on this planet. The dry, pure air possesses no taint of malaria; fevers are rare, except in a few localities, and the great, world-encircling epidemics lose half their violence. The statistics of San Francisco show that it is, already, one of the healthiest cities in the world. As a place for the development and the enjoyment of animal life, I know no land equal to California.

The peculiarity of the climate, combining great variation between day and night—with comparatively little variation between winter and summer—seems to be especially favorable to vegetable life; and this, I suspect, is the main cause of those productions which have astonished the world. Something, of course, may be attributed to the virgin vigor of a new soil; but where this has already been expended, as in the region about Los Angeles, the same results are obtained. With the exception of the apple, all fruits, from the fig to the pear, from the pomegranate and olive to the gooseberry and currant, thrive better than elsewhere. With regard to grapes, the average annual yield is fourteen pounds per vine. When all the vines now planted are in bearing condition, they will produce *five million* gallons of wine annually. A more wholesome and delicate sparkling wine is not easily found than that manufactured by the Brothers Sansevain, who bid fair to reproduce, on that far shore, the famous "Sansovino," the praises of which Redi, the Tuscan Bacchus, sang in his dancing verse. Let me add a few more specimens of vegetable

production to those I have already given. The *California Register* says: "A fig-tree, four years from the cutting, is seventeen inches around the stem, twenty feet high, and bears two crops a year; a grape-vine, three years old, yields eighty pounds of grapes; a tree, three years old, bears fifty-five apples, weighing, on an average, nine ounces each!"

The six months during which no rain falls have not the usual effect of a drouth in the Atlantic States. The grain is all ripe early in the season, and may be cut, threshed, measured, and sold (all in the open air) just as the farmer can spare time. The hard-baked surface of the earth covers a stratum of moister soil, into which the trees thrust their roots, and flourish; and though the velvet turf, which is the glory of northern lands, is wanting, yet the blue lupin, the orange-colored poppy, and other salamadrine flowers blossom in all the valleys. I saw but one genuine piece of turf in California. It was in front of a house in San José, where it was kept alive and fresh by artificial showers. Its dazzling greenness and beauty seemed to be little short of a miracle. Trees, when transplanted, require to be carefully watered the first summer, after which, they are generally able to supply themselves. Water, which is struck everywhere in the valleys, at a depth of twenty or thirty feet, is sweet and good.

So far as scenery is concerned, I can imagine nothing lovelier than the valleys of San José, Napa, Russian River, and San Ramon. The one feature which they lack—in common with the landscapes of Italy and Spain—is *water*. The streams which traverse them in winter, become dry, stony beds in summer, and the matchless trees which adorn their banks, have no glass wherein to mirror their beauty. In all other respects—color, outline, harmony of forms—there is nothing to be desired. Even the great plains of Sacramento and San Joaquin are redeemed from tameness by the superb framing of the distant mountains on either side, and thus are far more beautiful than those dreary, interminable prairies of the West, which fatigue the sight with their monotony.

The scenery of that portion of the Sierra Nevada which I visited is less picturesque and striking than that of other mountain-chains of equal height, owing to the uniform character of the great slopes between the rivers, buttressing the central chain. The two or three exceptions to this judgment, are Spartan cañon, the region about Mokelumne Hill, and Columbia. The valley of the Yosemite, further south, is the one grand and incomparable feature of the Sierra Nevada. Further north, however, the Shasta Peak, Lassen's Butte, and the upper valley of the Sacramento, present a new series of magnificent landscapes, forming the proper vestibule through which to approach Oregon, with its giant cones of solitary snow.

On the whole, California is a land where life seems to be most plastic—where, so far as climate, soil, and scenery are concerned, one may shape his existence in the most various moulds. Within the range of two hundred miles, he may live on the mountains, or by the sea—among pines or pomegranates—in snow or flowers—in the maddest whirl of business, or in dreamy indolence—on the confines of barbarism, or the topmost round of civilization. Why not, then, escape care, consumption, cold, neuralgia, fashion, bigotry, east-winds, gossip, and chilblains, and fly to that happy shore? For one simple reason: It is *too new*—too recently fallen into the possession of man—too far away from the great centres of the world's life—too little touched, as yet, with the genial influences of Art and Taste. Life, at present, is beautiful there but lonely; and so it must remain for another generation to come. In the valleys of the Coast Range, Nature is in advance of Man. Gold is yet King—though, I think, and hope, already beginning to shake a little on his throne.

Taking into consideration the fact that California was settled exclusively by persons in pursuit of wealth, and that money-making is, more especially there than elsewhere, the main object of life, the character of society is far less cold and sordid than might have been expected. Even the wealthy

circles, composed of families from all parts of the United States, and of all phases of refinement, have less pretentiousness and exclusiveness than the same circles in New York, Philadelphia, or Boston. There is a genial liberality, courtesy, and heartiness of demeanor, which is as refreshing as it is unexpected. A highly cultivated person would, undoubtedly, find many agreeable associates in San Francisco—though he might miss that vitalizing influence which a *productive* class of authors, artists, and *savans* always imparts to the intellect of a country. These are flowers that only grow after all other kinds of growth have been in a measure accomplished.

The influence of the climate has already made its impression on the character of the people. They will, in time, exhibit the same combination of Northern and Southern peculiarities; and the result, I hope, will be as favorable to their moral, as it undoubtedly will be to their physical nature. If this should be so—if they should possess an equal capacity for action and repose, warmth without fickleness, principle without coldness, a broad and genial humanity, earnestness combined with grace and softness, and a perception of life's duties in the midst of its sensuous enjoyments—there will at last be a *happy* American-born race. But this is expecting too much. I confess, when I look into the vile pit of California politics (holding my nose all the time), and note what is the standard of honesty in public affairs, my hope grows small. It is no worse, I must admit, than in the city of New York—an admission which does not better my statement. The home of Literature and Art, however, will be in the valleys near the coast—not among the scarred and tortured hills of gold, where official misrule most flourishes.

The children born in California are certainly a great improvement upon those born among us. Nowhere can more rosy specimens of health and beauty be found. Strong-limbed, red-blooded, graceful, and as full of happy animal life as young fawns, they bid fair to develop into admirable types of manhood and womanhood. To them, loving their native

soil with no acquired love—knowing no associations which are not linked with its blue skies and its yellow hills, we must look for its proper inhabitants, who will retain all that is vigorous, earnest, and generous in the present race, rejecting all that is coarse and mean. For myself, in breathing an air sweeter than that which first caught the honeyed words of Plato—in looking upon lovelier vales than those of Tempe and the Eurotas—in wandering through a land whose sentinel peak of Shasta far overtops the Olympian throne of Jupiter—I could not but feel that Nature must be false to her promise, or Man is not the splendid creature he once was, if the Art, and Literature, and Philosophy of Ancient Greece are not one day rivaled on this last of inhabited shores!



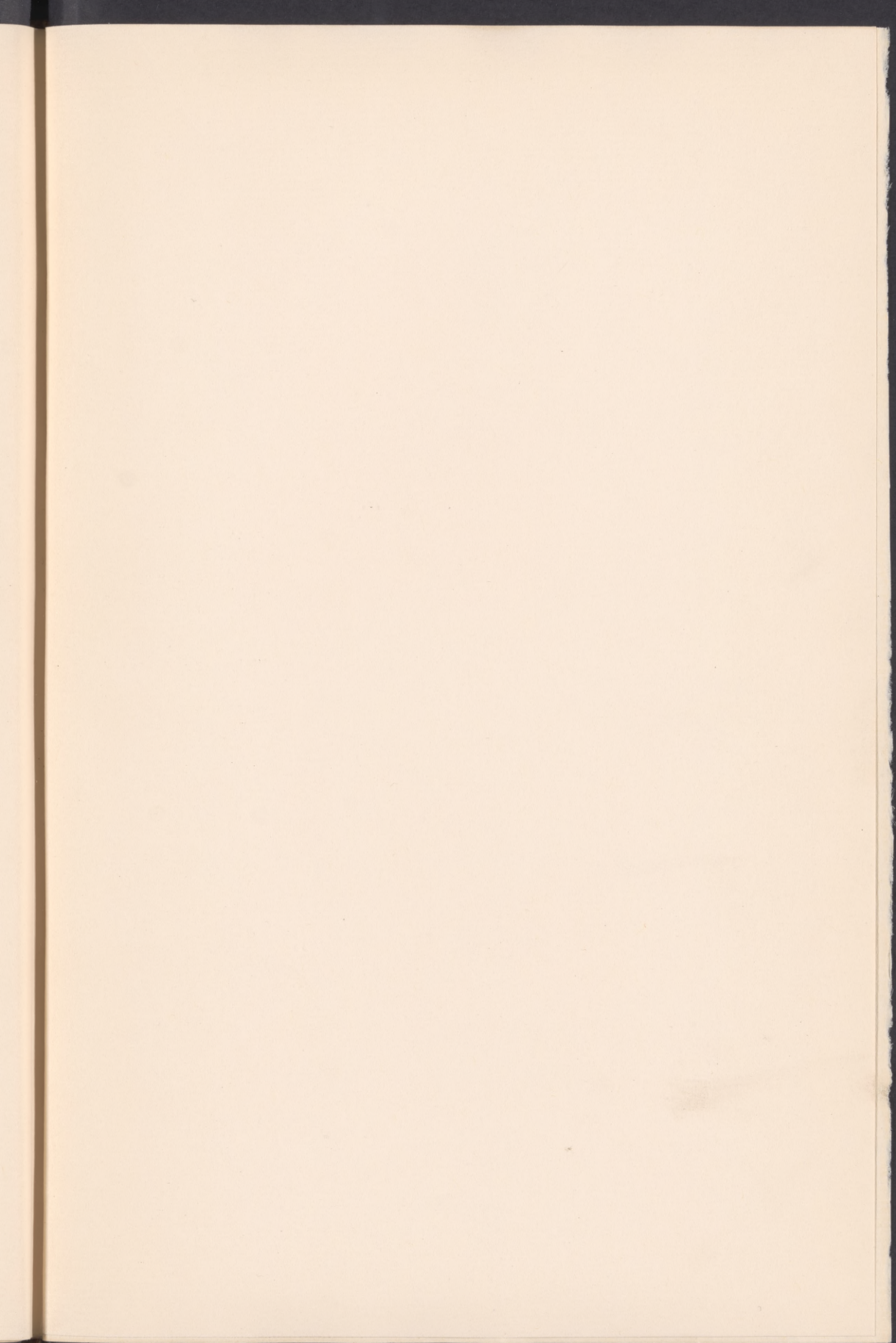
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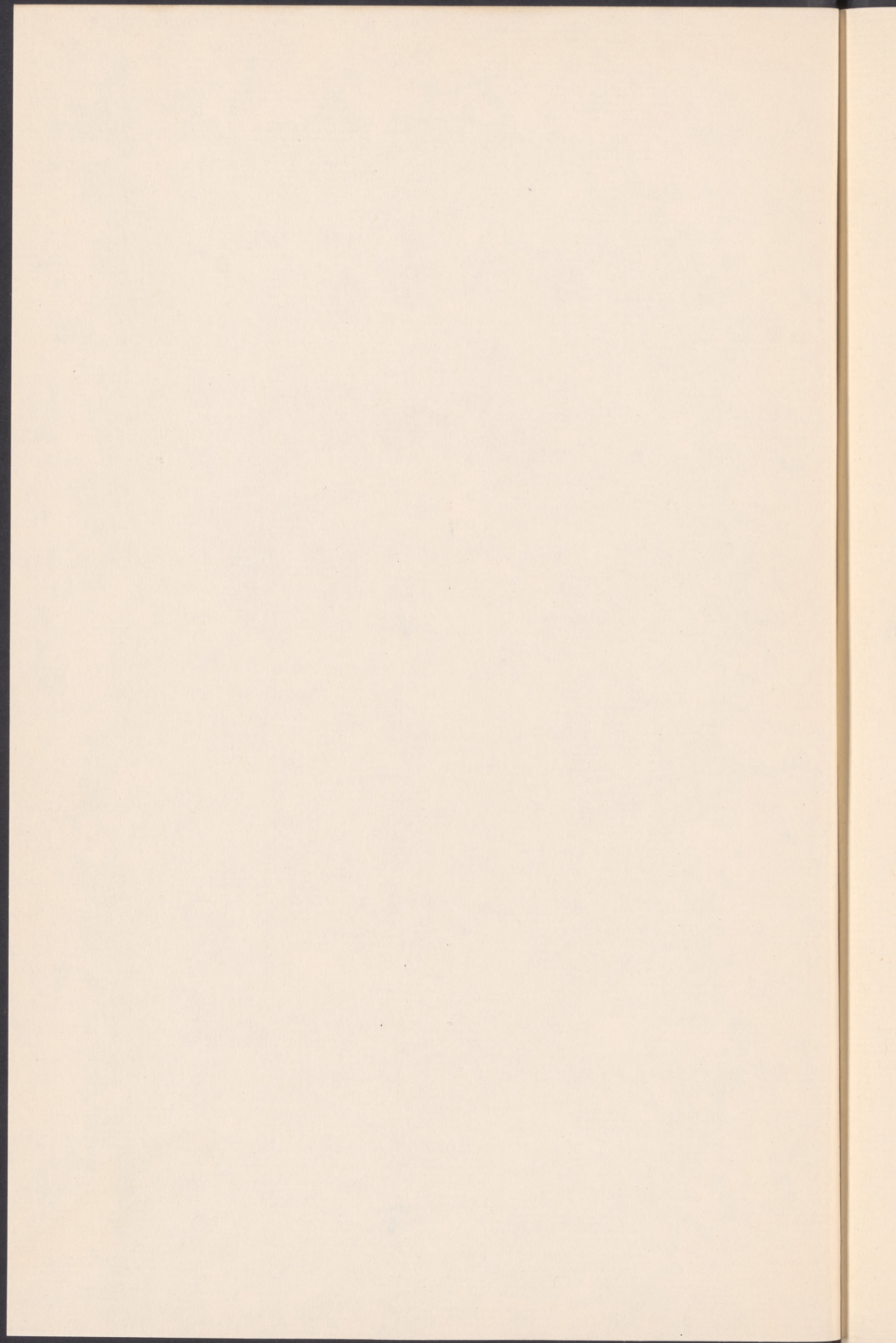
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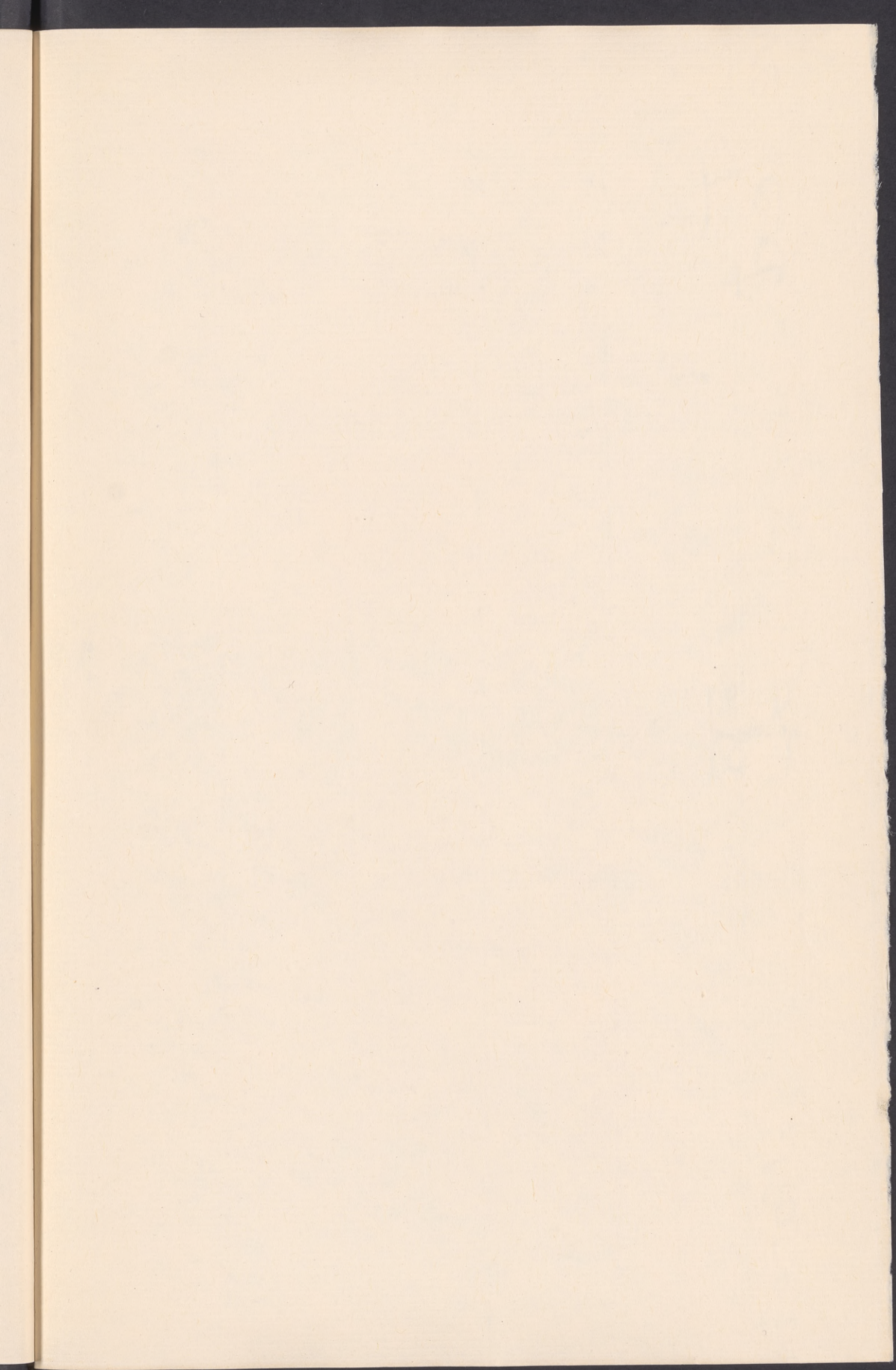
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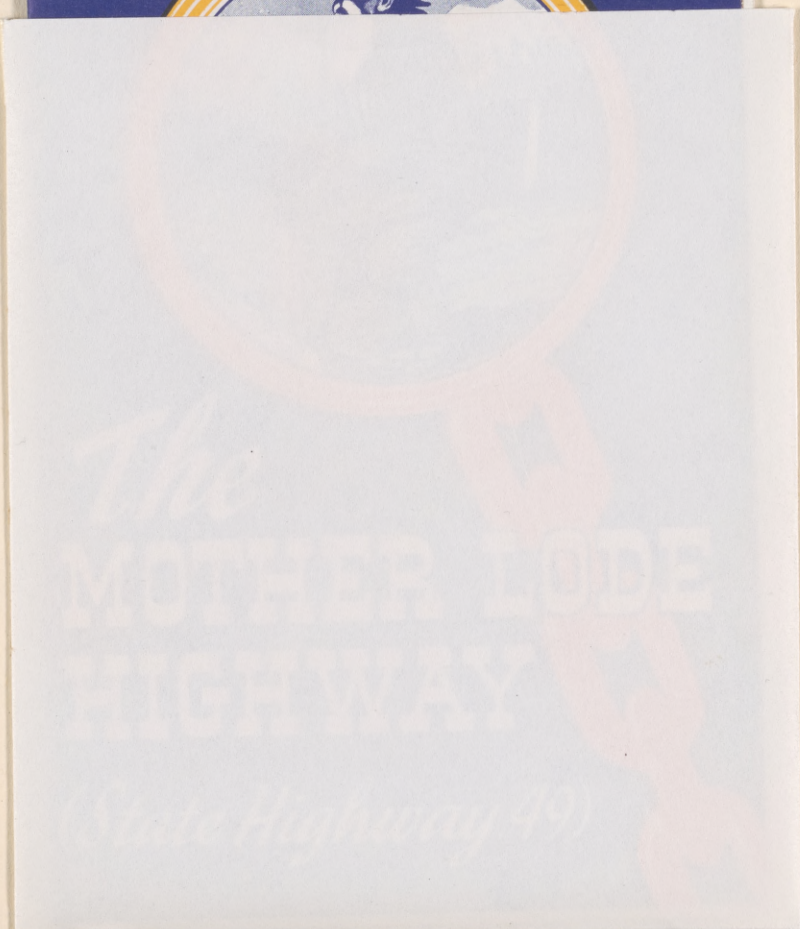


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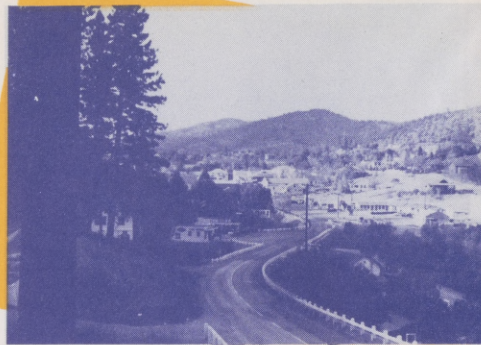


California's
**GOLDEN
CHAIN**



The
**MOTHER LODE
HIGHWAY**

(State Highway 49)



MARIPOSA COUNTY

*Southern Gateway to the Mother Lode
City of Mariposa, County Seat*

MARIPOSA — A Spanish word meaning Butterfly, was one of the original 27 counties of California when in 1850 California became the 31st State of the Union. Its present court house, which has been in continuous use these many, many years, was built in 1854 when the county seat was changed from "Agua Fria" to "Mariposa".

The City of Mariposa, southernmost city of the Mother Lode, is the "Western Gateway City" to the famous Yosemite National Park. Yosemite Valley, in this Park, was first entered by white men in May of 1851 during the Indian War, by the famous Mariposa Battalion under the command of James D. Savage. Dr. Lafayette H. Bunnell, a mining man and resident of Midpines, who participated in the honor and was an eye witness to the Valley's discovery, suggested the name of "Yo Semite" to honor the name of the Indian Tribe, and which means "Big Grizzly Bear".

As you leave the city of Mariposa traveling northward on the Mother Lode Highway — 49 — the remains of the famous Princeton Mine at Mount Bullion is the forerunner of the many, many gold mines along the Mother Lode which will constantly assure that you are in the gold mining country. Nine miles from Mariposa are the ruins of the famous Mount Ophir mint where in 1851, under Congressional authority, \$50.00 gold slugs were minted.

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Mariposa County Bids You Welcome



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*Home of Columbia—"GEM" of the Southern Mines
Sonora, County Seat*

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The Spanish explorer, Gabriel Moraga, named its two principal rivers the Stanislaus and the Tuolumne while on an exploration expedition in 1806. Later in 1827, the Jedediah Strong Smith Party entered what is now Tuolumne County from the Sierra Nevada side and had the distinction of being the first white people to set foot thereon.

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Famous for its very rich placer gold deposits, notably the "Shaw's Flat" and "Columbia Diggins", Tuolumne County still bears the scars of hydraulic mining, which can be seen along Highway 49. The richest area was at Columbia with over \$87,000,000.00 worth of gold recovered, and Columbia grew into a town of over 15,000 inhabitants. Known up and down the Mother Lode as the "GEM" of the Southern Mines, it missed becoming the State Capital of California by only two votes. Today it is officially known as "Columbia Historic State Park" and to miss visiting here would be a tragedy. The best preserved of the Mother Lode Ghost towns, one can see here the most photographed and famous "Columbia Wells Fargo Office" — "Fallon Hotel and Theater" — "St. Anne's Church" — "Old Papeete", one of the West's most famous fire fighting engines, and many other well preserved reminders of 1850. At Sonora, where the Mother Lode Highway and the Sonora Pass Highway cross, is located the Stanislaus National Forest Headquarters. The Sonora Pass Highway 108 gives access to this beautiful area, following closely the early wagon road over the Sierra, the historic wagon stations now being year-around recreational and summer home sites.

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*The Jumping Frog and Big Tree County
San Andreas, County Seat*

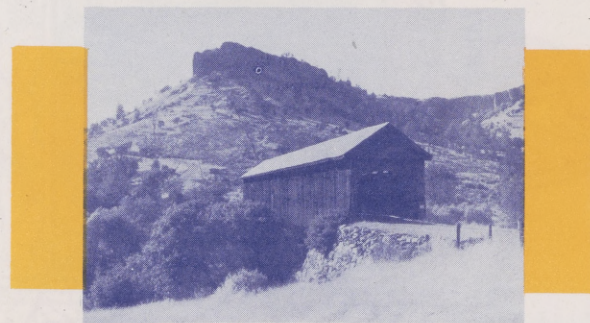
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It has often been said that Calaveras County contains a larger assortment of Mother Nature's handiwork than any other county in the state. Proof of her generosity with natural wonders can be found at the Calaveras Big Trees State Park. These Sequoia Giganteas are among the earth's oldest and largest living things. The beautiful and awe inspiring stalactites and stalagmites found in "Mercer Caverns" and "Moaning Cave" are truly spectacular. The Natural Bridges add still another wonder of the work of nature.

This beautiful recreation area is serviced by State Highway 4, which east of Angels Camp is called the "Ebbets Pass Highway". Mark Twain and Bret Harte gave the world many famous stories inspired by the stirring events of Calaveras County in the "Good Luck Era". Among them you will find the celebrated "Jumping Frog of Calaveras", "The Bell Ringer of Angels", "Luck of Roaring Camp", "Mrs. Skaggs' Husband", "Outcasts of Poker Flat", "Brown of Calaveras" and "Salomy Jane's Kiss". Finally, to add the romantic touch to this land of industry and play, there are such names as Joaquin Murietta and Black Bart whose traditional escapades are centered around many of the county's early day settlements and highways.

We hope you have enjoyed this brief sketch and that it has aroused your imagination and desire to seek further the HISTORY, SCENERY, and ROMANCE of The Mother Lode.



Calaveras County Bids You Welcome



AMADOR COUNTY

Heart of the Mother Lode—Jackson, County Seat

AMADOR — A Spanish word meaning love, is one of the Central counties of the Mother Lode group, and first knew the presence of the white man in 1846 when General John Sutter passed through. Its gold mining operations began in 1848, it reeled under the impact of the Gold Rush in 1849, and was proclaimed the County of Amador in 1854, selecting Jackson as its county seat.

From humble beginnings here, such well known national figures as: James Farley, U. S. Senator in 1878 and father of the one time Postmaster General; Anthony Caminetti, who practiced law in Jackson, later became U. S. Senator, and under President Wilson was Commissioner of Immigration; Angelo Rossi, who rose to fame as Mayor of San Francisco; and that most fabulous of all, Hetty Green, owner of the old Hetty Green Mine in Sutter Creek; all called Amador County "home".

Typical of all the foothill counties, Amador has two cascading mountain streams as its county boundaries—the Cosumnes on the North and the Mokelumne on the South. The middle Eastern part of the county is only five miles wide, a panhandle county with a ridge back. State Highway 88, better known as the Kit Carson Highway, traverses this ridge, and as one travels along atop the world, the rugged and wild panoramic beauty of the high Sierra country unfolds before you. Here is located the only East-West ridge road in California and many delightful hours may be spent gazing through field glasses from various promontories over this primitive back country.

West of Highway 49 lies the lone clay fields and the town of lone on the edge of the ancient lone Sea. It is a simple task for even the layman to find ancient fossil remains in the clays, when they were the bottom of this extinct sea, and the country along Highway 49 with its hydraulicked hillsides and eroded gulches makes it a rock hound's paradise.

A never to be forgotten delight to every visitor is the well preserved Ghost Mining Town of Volcano nestled at the base of the surrounding bare hydraulicked hillsides from which over \$9,000,000 in gold was recovered. Here also is the Masonic Cave where in 1854 the Masons of Volcano held their first five meetings. From Volcano, if you enjoy back country roads, a very scenic drive brings you to Fiddletown with its private Museum and Chinese adobe houses, or down Sutter Creek road to the City of Sutter Creek.

In Jackson, the Amador County Museum housed in the rehabilitated Brown Home, the show place of the Mother Lode in the 1850's and 60's, is a must to visit. Here you can walk in its beautifully kept gardens, enter its two story red brick stateliness and view most of its original furnishings as did many of California's prominent people. Come step back into the 19th century when the Glory of the Mother Lode was the Glory of California.

Amador County Bids You Welcome

EL DORADO COUNTY

*Gold Discovery County
Placerville, County Seat*

El Dorado County is the Gold Discovery County of the Mother Lode — here the history and romance of the early days began on January 24, 1848, when James Marshall found the shining nuggets at Sutter's Mill, Coloma, on the American River. The excited thousands poured West across the plains by wagon trains and around the Horn by racing Clipper ships — all seeking the golden treasure along the creeks and riverbeds of the vast Sierra foothill country.

Hydraulic and deep mining developed, and many of the early day settlers stayed on to play their part in early California history in such colorful towns and camps as Grizzly Flat —



Shingle Springs — Old Hangtown — Gold Hill — Coloma — Pilot Hill and Georgetown. Businesses were established and agriculture developed to supply the thriving mining industry and growing population. Many men who were later to become nationally known had their small start in business in this area. Mark Hopkins had a grocery store in Placerville and Philip D. Armour's small butcher shop was in the center of town. Edwin Markham was a teacher here and John M. Studebaker built and sold wheelbarrows to the miners. Sheriff James B. Hume of Wells Fargo fame; Hank Monk and the famous Snowshoe Thompson — all these and many others had a part in early El Dorado County history. Visitors to the Mother Lode will find many interesting articles displayed in the Pioneer Historical Museum located in the El Dorado County Chamber of Commerce Building in Placerville. Today El Dorado County is a happy blending of the old and the new — with its ever-interesting background of pioneer history and its present-day up-to-the-minute development of homes and recreational facilities. The trail of the Pony Express is now a wide highway to the forests, lakes and playgrounds of the high Sierra in the Eldorado National Forest, headquarter offices in Placerville.

The vast El Dorado National Forest and beautiful Lake Tahoe provide unsurpassed recreational advantages. Great stands of virgin timber, mountain lakes and trout streams provide the perfect setting for summer homes and vacation seekers. Along U. S. Highway 50 and the American River Canyon Route to Echo Summit and Lake Tahoe are many resorts catering to every need of those who travel and play in summer or the multitude who play in the vast snowy expanse in the winter. Lake Tahoe — famed jewel of the high Sierra, is America's largest lake at an elevation of more than 6,000 feet above sea level. It is 23 miles long and 13 miles wide, surrounded by rugged, tree-covered mountains and fed by sparkling streams from perpetual snow banks. Here are wide, sandy beaches and colorful resorts — everything you've dreamed of for a perfect vacation.

El Dorado County Bids You Welcome



PLACER COUNTY

*Northern Gateway to the Mother Lode
Auburn, County Seat*

PLACER, derived from the Spanish term used to designate surface mining of gold, was organized April 25, 1851 from parts of Yuba and Sutter Counties.

The first settlement in the region was made in 1844 by Theodore Sicard, a French sailor, who built an adobe house on the south bank of the Bear River near Johnson's Crossing, about three miles east of Wheatland. One of Sicard's men, a man named Claude Chana, discovered gold in the Auburn Ravine in May 1848, about four months after John Marshall's original discovery at Coloma. The gold rush followed the next year, hordes of miners poured into the region and settlement and development followed rapidly. Theodore Judah, whose brilliant mind conceived and carried out the building of a railroad over the Sierra, raised the first money for this venture in the town of Dutch Flat. The railroad was started in 1864 and completed in 1869 with the driving of the golden spike at Promontory Point, Utah. This railroad, little changed from Judah's original survey, is now the main transcontinental line of the Southern Pacific and runs the length of the county where it has been a large factor in the economic development of the community.

The Eastern part of Placer County, where year round recreation can be found, serves each year as host to many, many thousands of visitors. Here in the higher elevations is California's greatest winter sports area, with the finest of equipment and accommodations. Placer County dressed in its gala attire of greenclad mountains, shimmering lakes, and old world quaintness in modern setting, will linger long in the memory of all visitors.

Running the entire length of the county is U. S. Highway 40, and as one travels westward from Reno, Nevada, toward California's State Capital, Sacramento, it passes over Donner Summit and Lake. A very beautiful monument located here is dedicated to those who perished in the Donner Party, and recalls to one's memory the ill-fated Donner Party which attempted to reach California in 1846 over the then named California Trail. Here they were trapped during the winter of 1846-47 and nearly the entire party perished. Transcontinental U. S. 40 follows closely this old California Trail and as we pause to gaze at this monument we can do nothing but admire the courage of our forbears. U. S. 40 is also the northern gateway to both — that jewel of the Sierra, LAKE TAHOE, and the Mother Lode Highway No. 49 which intersects U. S. 40 at Auburn. In later years, more and more people are saying "If you have not visited the Mother Lode — you have not seen California", therefore, from here to any point South, be sure and travel over California's most scenic route —

THE MOTHER LODGE HIGHWAY.

Placer County Bids You Welcome

CALIFORNIA'S GOLDEN CHAIN

THE MOTHER LODE* COUNTRY

(*The Mother Lode itself is a gold-bearing quartz vein, often referred to as a "source vein", originating deep within the earth and outcropping in the Mother Lode Country. From this gold-bearing "source vein" had come the alluvial or placer gold which the first miners in 1848-49 discovered and panned from the creek beds, streams and gulches. The later discovery of this, the Mother Lode vein, sent the miners underground, in some places over 6,000 feet, in search of gold.)

No region in the United States has accumulated a richer or more extensive tradition than this — the Mother Lode Country — located on the western slope of the Majestic Sierra within the Auburn-Lake Tahoe-Yosemite National Park-Mariposa quadrangle. It has likewise been so bountifully endowed with natural beauty and pleasantness of climate as to be one of the most fortunate regions of California. Surely, then, this very small part of the world, to have been so generously treated by Mother Nature, must have something beyond comparison for each of us if we would but tarry awhile within its magical boundary.

HIGHWAY 49—Popularly known as the "MOTHER LODE HIGHWAY" and one of California's few remaining REALLY scenic routes, begins at the eastern edge of the town of Mariposa, taking off from a point where the much traveled road from Merced to Yosemite Valley leaves this, the southernmost of the old gold mining towns. It winds northward across rolling uplands deeply intersected by canyons of swift flowing rivers, onward through dozens of busy small cities and villages and not so busy ghost mining towns, following closely the freight wagon roads of yester-years that first linked together these gold mining camps. It is the North and South artery of the foothill gold belt—the Mother Lode Country, passing through six counties until it reaches the city of Auburn, where it is intersected by U. S. 40. Highway 49 is truly a highway of leisure travel with each curve bringing forth new adventures and delights. The exposed cuts of beautifully mineralized rocks, the hydraulicked hillsides, eroded gulches, abandoned mines, breath-taking panoramic views, and the chuckles from still remaining colorful names and places as "Six Bit Gulch" — "Rawhide" — "Whiskey Slide" — "Fiddletown" — 49 carries you through the very heart of California's Gold Country. Yet, to really see and know the beauty of the Mother Lode some side trips into the lesser traveled country should be included in your travel plans.



Here in the Mother Lode you will find an area where the recreation seeker of the most exacting tastes can find many, many hours of enjoyment and relaxation. Truly — recreation of such a diversified nature as here, is the exception and within the magical boundaries of the Mother Lode

ONE CAN VISIT AND VIEW:

California's most historical and colorful country
(Where the gold was found in 1848 — where they were rushing to in 1849 — and the Cradle of Statehood in 1850.)
Rugged scenic beauty that is ageless, protected by the boundaries of two National Forests — The Stanislaus and the El Dorado National Forests
Spring flowering of fruit trees and fields carpeted with colorful wildflowers

The high altitude fantasy of coloring when Autumn comes
Cascading mountain streams and high elevation sky blue lakes
Giant Sequoia trees, the world's oldest and largest living things
The fairy wonderland of Mammoth Subterranean Caverns
The active and flourishing century-old foothill towns, or
The Ghost mining towns and quaint museums
OR ONE CAN —
Hunt the beast of the woodlands or the feathered game
Fish the mountain streams and lakes for the wily trout
Horseback ride through the primitive back country
Go boating, either row — putt-putt — or sail in the many lakes
Loll in the sunshine on sandy or gravel beaches, or

Swim in the invigorating and crystal clear snow-fed lakes
Explore the country by car over winding all-weather side roads
Enjoy California's finest winter sports area — both in snow conditions, ski and sled runs, and accommodations.

All this, and a wide variety of foods excellently prepared in surroundings and atmosphere of yester-year, combined with the modern accommodations we so enjoy today, can only bring to one's mind —

This part of California was destined many, many years ago to offer sanctuary today to the multitudes who reside in the crowded centers of population, to allow us today to view California of yesterday while we relax amidst a scenic and beautiful part of the world — second to none.

Again—Welcome to the Mother Lode! Why not stop in and visit, or write our Chambers of Commerce and secure more detailed information on the many interesting sights along California's Golden Chain, The Mother Lode Highway?



To make your trip along CALIFORNIA'S GOLDEN CHAIN more enjoyable stop in or write to the Chambers of Commerce for detailed information and exciting suggested side trips throughout California's fabulous Sierra Foothill GOLD COUNTRY.



Chamber of Commerce
Mariposa County
Tuolumne County
Calaveras County
Amador County
El Dorado County

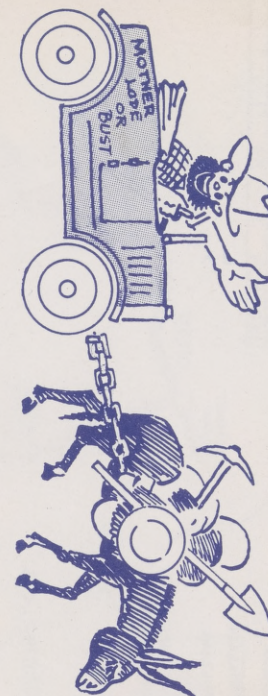
Overland Routes, Inc.

Address
Mariposa, California
Sonora, California
San Andreas, California
Jackson, California
Placerville, California

and

Colfax, California

On California's Golden Chain
State Highway 49



From

Stamp

California's GOLDEN CHAIN



The MOTHER LODE HIGHWAY

(State Highway 49)

CALIFORNIA'S GOLDEN CHAIN

THE MOTHER LODE

In this land of the west the magnet was gold, Worldly its fame and the story bold. Blood of all races the Argonauts came To mine for Gold and the land to tame.

From their mines of old through toil and pain They looked for gold to make this chain. Through wagon trail ruts came men with new strength To link mining camps and the chain gathered length.

Each link symbolic an historic page Laid o'er the ground to form a stage. A dividing line twist work and play—

The men of the past, you could hear them say. West was the land men would till without rest To create an empire, the pride of the West. East was the land that must be proclaimed

A haven for people, recreation its fame. And along this chain their monuments stand, Built from the gold they took from the land. With sincerity of thought and greatness of code They reverently named it

THE MOTHER LODE

FRED WITTA, JR., Author
Amador County

GOLD PANNING



DONNER MONUMENT



PROSPECT SHAFT



MARSHALL MONUMENT



Legend

- U.S. HIGHWAYS WITH MILEAGE.
- STATE HIGHWAYS WITH MILEAGE.
- COUNTY ROADS WITH MILEAGE.
- ROAD CLOSED BY SNOW AT THIS POINT DURING WINTER. SEE NOTE BELOW.
- SKI AREAS.
- ALL ROADS LEAD TO THE MOTHER LODE. TURN HERE.
- CAMP GROUNDS.
- NATIONAL FOREST BOUNDARIES.
- STATE PARKS. ☆ COUNTY SEATS.

MILEAGES BETWEEN COUNTY SEATS

	PLACERVILLE	JACKSON	SAN ANDREAS	SONORA
MARIPOSA	138	105	89	60
SONORA	78	45	29	
SAN ANDREAS	49	16		
JACKSON	33			

APPROXIMATE POSITION OF THE MOTHER LODE IN RELATION TO OTHER PARTS OF CALIFORNIA



LONG TON



TAILING WHEELS



TUNNEL MINE



YOSEMITE VALLEY



ARRASTRA



San Francisco

LOGGING WAGON



HYDRAULIC SLUICING



COLUMBIA STATE PARK



CHINESE ROCKER



California's GOLDEN CHAIN

The MOTHER LODGE HIGHWAY

(State Highway 49)

Stamp

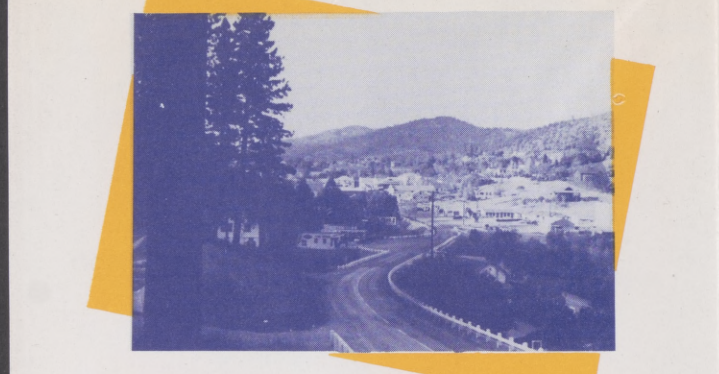
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To

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Overland Routes, Inc. and

Colfax, California

El Dorado County

Amador County

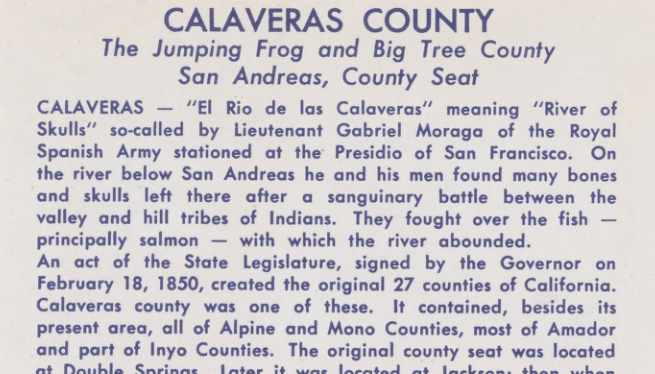
Calaveras County

Sonora, California

Mariposa County

Address

Chamber of Commerce



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The Jumping Frog and Big Tree County
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CALAVERAS — "El Rio de las Calaveras" meaning "River of Skulls" so-called by Lieutenant Gabriel Moraga of the Royal Spanish Army stationed at the Presidio of San Francisco. On the river below San Andreas he and his men found many bones and skulls left there after a sanguinary battle between the valley and hill tribes of Indians. They fought over the fish — principally salmon — with which the river abounded.

An act of the State Legislature, signed by the Governor on February 18, 1850, created the original 27 counties of California. Calaveras county was one of these. It contained, besides its present area, all of Alpine and Mono Counties, most of Amador and part of Inyo Counties. The original county seat was located at Double Springs. Later it was located at Jackson; then when Amador County was created, it was moved to Mokelumne Hill. In the sixties it was changed to its present location at San Andreas. Gold was found in Calaveras County a few months after the original discovery by James Marshall at Sutter's Mill on January 24, 1848. Untold millions have been taken from the placer and quartz mines of the county. Mokelumne Hill, Murphys, Angels Camp, and Melones were among the many rich placer mining districts. Famous quartz mines were "The Morgan" at Carson Hill, "The Utica" at Angels Camp, "The Gwin" at Paloma, "The Sheep Ranch", "The Royal", and "Mountain King" at Hodson. Top producers of copper were the mines at Campo Seco and Copperopolis.

It has often been said that Calaveras County contains a larger assortment of Mother Nature's handiwork than any other county in the state. Proof of her generosity with natural wonders can be found at the Calaveras Big Trees State Park. These Sequoia Giganteas are among the earth's oldest and largest living things. The beautiful and awe inspiring stalactites and stalagmites found in "Mercer Caverns" and "Moaning Cave" are truly spectacular. The Natural Bridges add still another wonder of the work of nature.

This beautiful recreation area is serviced by State Highway 4, which east of Angels Camp is called the "Ebbetts Pass Highway". Mark Twain and Bret Harte gave the world many famous stories inspired by the stirring events of Calaveras County in the "Good Luck Era". Among them you will find the celebrated "Jumping Frog of Calaveras", "The Bell Ringer of Angels", "Luck of Roaring Camp", "Mrs. Skaggs' Husband", "Outcasts of Poker Flat", "Brown of Calaveras" and "Salomy Jane's Kiss".

Finally, to add the romantic touch to this land of industry and play, there are such names as Joaquin Murietta and Black Bart whose traditional escapades are centered around many of the county's early day settlements and highways.

We hope you have enjoyed this brief sketch and that it has aroused your imagination and desire to seek further the HISTORY, SCENERY, and ROMANCE of The Mother Lode.

Calaveras County Bids You Welcome

Golden Chain more enjoyable stop in or

write to the Chambers of

Commerce for detailed

information and exciting

suggested side trips throughout California's

fabulous Sierra Foothill GOLD COUNTRY.



AMADOR COUNTY

Heart of the Mother Lode—Jackson, County Seat

AMADOR — A Spanish word meaning love, is one of the Central counties of the Mother Lode group, and first knew the presence of the white man in 1846 when General John Sutter passed through. Its gold mining operations began in 1848, it reeled under the impact of the Gold Rush in 1849, and was proclaimed the County of Amador in 1854, selecting Jackson as its county seat.

From humble beginnings here, such well known national figures as: James Farley, U. S. Senator in 1878 and father of the one time Postmaster General; Anthony Caminetti, who practiced law in Jackson, later became U. S. Senator, and under President Wilson was Commissioner of Immigration; Angelo Rossi, who rose to fame as Mayor of San Francisco; and that most fabulous of all, Hetty Green, owner of the old Hetty Green Mine in Sutter Creek; all called Amador County "home".

Typical of all the foothill counties, Amador has two cascading mountain streams as its county boundaries—the Cosumnes on the North and the Mokelumne on the South. The middle Eastern part of the county is only five miles wide, a panhandle county with a ridge back. State Highway 88, better known as the Kit Carson Highway, traverses this ridge, and as one travels along atop the world, the rugged and wild panoramic beauty of the high Sierra country unfolds before you. Here is located the only East-West ridge road in California and many delightful hours may be spent gazing through field glasses from various promontories over this primitive back country.

West of Highway 49 lies the lone clay fields and the town of lone on the edge of the ancient Lone Sea. It is a simple task for even the layman to find ancient fossil remains in the clays, when they were the bottom of this extinct sea, and the country along Highway 49 with its hydraulicked hillsides and eroded gulches makes it a rock hound's paradise.

A never to be forgotten delight to every visitor is the well preserved Ghost Mining Town of Volcano nestled at the base of the surrounding bare hydraulicked hillsides from which over \$9,000,000 in gold was recovered. Here also is the Masonic Cave where in 1854 the Masons of Volcano held their first five meetings. From Volcano, if you enjoy back country roads, a very scenic drive brings you to Fiddletown with its private Museum and Chinese adobe houses, or down Sutter Creek road to the City of Sutter Creek.

In Jackson, the Amador County Museum housed in the rehabilitated Brown Home, the show place of the Mother Lode in the 1850's and 60's, is a must to visit. Here you can walk in its beautifully kept gardens, enter its two story red brick staleness and view most of its original furnishings as did many of California's prominent people. Come step back into the 19th century when the Glory of the Mother Lode was the Glory of California.

Amador County Bids You Welcome

EL DORADO COUNTY

Gold Discovery County

Placerville, County Seat



EL DORADO COUNTY

Gold Discovery County
Placerville, County Seat

El Dorado County is the Gold Discovery County of the Mother Lode — here the history and romance of the early days began on January 24, 1848, when James Marshall found the shining nuggets at Sutter's Mill, Coloma, on the American River. The excited thousands poured West across the plains by wagon trains and around the Horn by racing Clipper ships — all seeking the golden treasure along the creeks and riverbeds of the vast Sierra foothill country.

Hydraulic and deep mining developed, and many of the early day settlers stayed on to play their part in early California history in such colorful towns and camps as Grizzly Flat —

El Dorado County Bids You Welcome

CALIFORNIA'S GOLDEN CHAIN

THE MOTHER LODGE HIGHWAY



PLACER COUNTY

Northern Gateway to the Mother Lode
Auburn, County Seat

PLACER, derived from the Spanish term used to designate surface mining of gold, was organized April 25, 1851 from parts of Yuba and Sutter Counties.

The first settlement in the region was made in 1844 by Theodore Seward, a French sailor, who built an adobe house on the south bank of the Bear River near Johnson's Crossing, about three miles east of Wheatland. One of Seward's men, a man named Claude Chana, discovered gold in the Auburn Ravine in May 1848, about four months after John Marshall's original discovery at Coloma. The gold rush followed the next year, hordes of miners poured into the region and settlement and development followed rapidly. Theodore Judah, whose brilliant mind conceived and carried out the building of a railroad over the Sierra, raised the first money for this venture in the town of Dutch Flat. The railroad was started in 1864 and completed in 1869 with the driving of the golden spike at Promontory Point, Utah. This railroad, little changed from Judah's original survey, is now the main transcontinental line of the Southern Pacific and runs the length of the county where it has been a large factor in the economic development of the community.

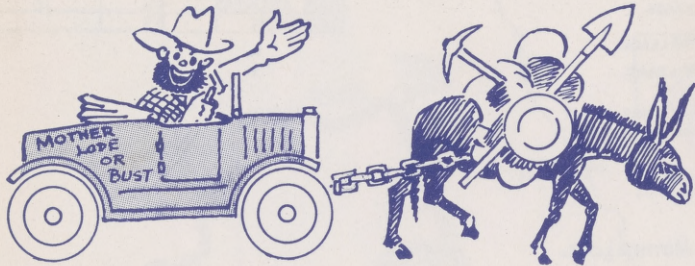
The Eastern part of Placer County, where year round recreation can be found, serves each year as host to summer, many thousands of visitors. Here in the higher elevations is California's greatest winter sports area, with the finest of equipment and accommodations. Placer County dressed in its gala attire of greenland mountains, shimmering lakes, and old world quaintness in modern setting, will linger long in the memory of all visitors.

Running the entire length of the county is U. S. Highway 40, and as one travels westward from Reno, Nevada, toward California's State Capital, Sacramento, it passes over Donner Summit and Lake. A very beautiful monument located here is dedicated to those who perished in the Donner Party, and recalls to one's memory the ill-fated Donner Party which attempted to reach California in 1846 over the then named California Trail. Here they were trapped during the winter of 1846-47 and nearly the entire party perished. Transcontinental U. S. 40 follows closely this old California Trail and as we pause to gaze at this monument we can do nothing but admire the courage of our forbears.

U. S. 40 is also the northern gateway to both — that jewel of the Sierra, LAKE TAHOE, and the Mother Lode Highway No. 49 which intersects U. S. 40 at Auburn. In later years, more and more people are saying "If you have not visited the Mother Lode — you have not seen California", therefore, from here to any point South, be sure and travel over California's most scenic route —

THE MOTHER LODGE HIGHWAY.

Placer County Bids You Welcome



On California's Golden Chain
State Highway 49

From _____

Stamp

To _____

